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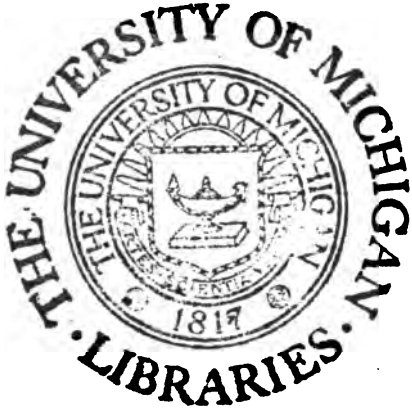
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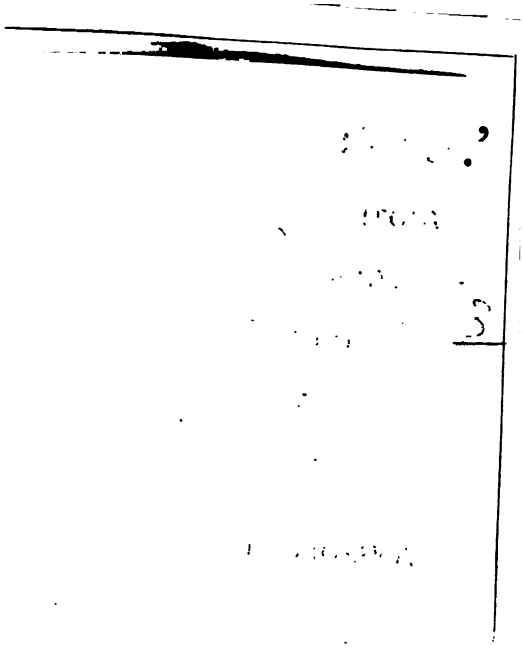

'The Poet of Poets.'

The Love-Verſe from the Minor Poems of Edmund Spenſer

ALEXANDER B. GROSART,
Editor

LONDON
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INTRODUCTION.

The MINOR POEMS *alone of Spenſer ſhould amply fill at leaſt ſix volumes of the* **Elizabethan Library**. *Conſequently one repreſentative portion had to be choſen. In ſelecting his*

Love-Verse

I think all will agree that not only is it eaſily ſeparable from the vaſt maſs of his poetry, but that it ſhows

'The Poet of Poets'

at his higheſt and fineſt and moſt diſtinctive in almoſt every characteriſtic of his genius. In the ſeveral places I give references and explanations that will guide the ſtudent-reader to ſources of information on the ſucceſſive poems and noticeable facts of the immortal Singer's life contained in them. Specifically, I deem it expedient to record here that the 'Amoretti' and the ſupreme 'Epithalamion' on his own marriage, take new intereſt and ſignificance from our diſcovery of who his

'Elizabeth,' his wife, was, viz., Elizabeth Boyle, kinſwoman of the 'Great Earl' of Cork. This diſcovery will be found fully told and eſtabliſhed in our edition of Spenſer's Complete Works, as below,[1] *and in the 'Liſmore Papers,' as firſt tranſcribed, edited, and annotated by us for his Grace, the late honoured and lamented Duke of Devonſhire.*[2] *Attention may be directed to the following:*

[1] The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Edmund Spenser: edited, with a new Life based on original researches. . . By the Rev. Alexander B. Grosart, D.D., LL.D. (Edin.), F.S.A. (Scot.); in association with foremost scholars of the day. In 10 vols. (vol. x. still due): for private circulation. See vol. i., pp. 190-202, 'Wooing and Marriage—Wife's name for the first time disclosed.'

[2] (*a*) The Lismore Papers (First Series), viz., 'Autobiographical Notes,' 'Remembrances and Diaries of Sir Richard Boyle, First and "Great" Earl of Cork.' Never before printed. Edited with Introductions and Notes and Illustrations by the Rev. Alexander B. Grosart, D.D., LL.D. (Edin.), F.S.A. (Scot.), from the original MSS. belonging to his Grace the Duke of Devonshire, preserved in Lismore Castle. In 5 vols., 4to. Printed for private circulation, 1886. (*b*) Second Series, viz., 'Selections from the Private and Public (or State) Correspondence.' In 5 vols., 4to. 1888.

First Series: Vol. i., Introduction, pp. xiv-xviii.

Second Series: Vol. i., Introduction, pp. xv-xvi.

Prefixed to the latter volume is a photo-facsimile of a letter of Lady Tynt (née Boyle), and to vol. iii. (Second Series) a like facsimile of a document signed by Peregrine Spenser, the poet's son by Elizabeth Boyle. It thus commences:

'Be it known unto all men by these presents that I, Peregrine Spenser, gent., one of the sonnes of the Lady Elizabeth Tynt,' etc. I place below other references.[3] *I must also be allowed the pleasure of referring to my friend of many years, the late Dean Church's 'Life of Spenser'* (1888), *pp.* 237-238. *I would only re-*

[3] First Series, i. xiv-xviii; 274-5, 291, 294, 299; ii. 345, 358, 360, 363, 374, 375, 391, 392, 404, 430; iii. 238, 247, 261, 274; iv. 242-3, 245; v. 254 (see 'Seckerstone' and 'Tynt'). Second Series, ii. 12, 13, 60, 237-8; iii. 79-80. Lady Tynt was sister of Alexander Boyle of Hereford, and thus 'kinswoman,' *i.e.* 'cousin,' of the 'Great Earl,' who was godfather to Roger Seckerstone, her second husband, and gave her away at her third marriage to Robert, later Sir Robert Tynt.

peat here what the Dean ſtates, that 'Thus diſappear (1) *the notion hitherto that the poet's wife was "a maiden of low degree"; (2) the Iriſh-American theories and ſpeculations that ſhe was an Elizabeth Nagle—beſides ſhedding light on not a few places in the "Amoretti"'* (*p.* 238).

With immediate relation to the Love-Verſe, our chapter in the new Life entitled 'Love-Experiences—Shine and Shadow' (*Works, vol. i., pp.* 121-129), *preſents our 'grave and ſerious' poet in a new light, viz., that he was a man moſt certainly impreſſionable, ſuſceptible, impulſive, ſenſuous* (*not ſenſual*), *and apt as ever was Robert Burns to fall in love with every beautiful face that ſhone on him.*

Our arrangement of our Selections is as nearly as poſſible chronological. That is to ſay, we commence with the 'Roſalind' love in 'The Shepherd's Calendar,' and go forward through the 'Hymns' on 'Love' and 'Beauty' and 'Heavenly Love' (*not giving 'Heavenly Beauty' as not of the claſs choſen, and as falling ſhort of the others*),—*though poſſibly theſe Hymns may have preceded the 'Calendar,'—to the 'Amoretti' and 'Epithalamion.' The 'Prothalamion' follows, and the impaſſioned cloſe of 'Colin*

Clout's come Home again.' His celebration in the latter of Raleigh's croſſed 'love,' and his marvellous tribute to his own 'firſt love,' Roſalind, muſt ever make it remarkable. Thoſe who maſter this volume of his Love-Verſe, might do worſe than thereafter turn to 'Colin Clout's come Home again' in full.

Our text throughout is our own in the Works, but in the ſpelling of our own time, ſave where modern ſpelling would break the rhythm. Our few Notes and Illuſtrations ſpeak for themſelves. Sir Walter Scott voices the 'burden' of the preſent volume and a thouſand others:

'In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed;
In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;
In halls, in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets, dances on the green;
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above;
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.'

Alexander B. Grosart.

Dublin.

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I. FROM 'THE SHEPHERD'S CALENDAR.'

The 'Shepherd's Calendar' was ſubſtantially the work of the years between 1573 *(when Spenſer took his Bachelor's degree) and* 1579, *in the April of which year Edward Kirke's Epiſtle is dated. It was firſt publiſhed anonymouſly in* 1579 *(fac-ſimile of the original title-page in Works, as before, vol. ii.). 'Roſalinde' is the lady-love of the 'Calendar,' and an anſwer to the queſtions 'Who was Roſalinde?' and 'Who was Menalcas?' (Spenſer's ſucceſsful rival) will be found in our eſſay (Works, vol. iii., as before) entitled 'Who were Roſalinde and Menalcas?' (pp. lxxii—cvii). The love-verse of the 'Calendar,' independent of its intrinſic value, has extrinſic biographical intereſt. No thorough and capable ſtudent of Spenſer can fail to ſee how potential was the influence of Roſalinde on him. And here I muſt quote myſelf:*

'What Beatrice was to Dante even when he had married his Gemma Donati—and such a marriage!—and even wooed and sung of the beautiful Lucheſe Gentucca; or "Stella" to Sidney, when he, too, had married the widow of Eſſex; or what "Highland Mary" was to Burns, though Jean Armour was his loving and beloved wife, "Roſalinde," until he died, was to Edmund Spenſer. A "firſt love" (often at firſt ſight) is ineradicable, and when unattained becomes tranſfigured and holy without deſpite done to another who has been wooed and won. How exquiſitely is this put by "the ſad Florentine," when he deſcribes the fore-feeling of the approaching Beatrice in her flame-chariot!

'"At whose touch
The power of ancient love was strong within him."'—Works, as before, i., 193.

We limit ourſelves to the portions of the 'Calendar' that refer to 'Roſalinde.'—G.

1. JANUARY.

ARGUMENT.

In this firſt Eglogue Colin Clout, *a ſhepherd's boy, complaineth himſelf of his unfortunate love, being but newly (as it ſeemeth) enamoured of a country laſs called* Roſalinde: *with which ſtrong affection being very ſore travailed, he compareth his careful caſe to the ſad ſeaſon of the year, to the froſty ground, to the frozen trees, and to his own winter-beaten flock. And laſtly, finding himſelf robbed of all former pleaſance and delight, he breaketh his pipe in pieces, and caſteth himſelf to the ground.*

Colin Clout.

A Shepherd's boy (no better do him call)
When Winter's waſteful ſpite was almoſt ſpent,
All in a ſunſhine day, as did befal;
Led forth his flock, that had been long ypent:

So faint they woxe,[1] and feeble in the fold,
That now unnethes[2] their feet could them uphold.

All as the ſheep, ſuch was the ſhepherd's look,
For pale and wan he was, (alas the while!)
May-ſeem he lov'd, or elſe ſome care[3] he took:
Well couth[4] he tune his pipe, and frame his ſtyle:
Then to a hill his fainting flock he led,
And thus him plain'd, the while his ſheep there fed.

Ye gods of love, that pity lovers' pain,
(If any gods the pain of lovers pity:)
Look from above, where you in joys remain,
And bow your ears unto my doleful ditty;
And *Pan*, thou ſhepherd's god, that once didſt love,
Pity the pains, that thou thyſelf didſt prove.

[1] *waxed.* [2] *ſcarcely.*
[3] *anxiety, diſtreſs.* [4] *could.*

Thou barren ground whom Winter's
wrath hath waſted,
Art made a mirror, to behold my plight;
Whilom thy freſh Spring flower'd, and
after haſted
Thy Summer proud, with Daffadillies
dight;[5]
And now is come thy Winter's ſtormy
ſtate,
Thy mantle marr'd, wherein thou
maſkedſt late.

Such rage as Winter's reigneth in my
heart,
My life blood freezing, with unkindly[6]
cold:
Such ſtormy ſtoures,[7] do breed my baleful
ſmart,
As if my years were waſte, and waxen
old.
And yet, alas, but now my Spring
begun!
And yet, alas, it is already done![8]

[5] *decked.* [6] *unnatural.* [7] *fits.*
[8] Cf. Shakespeare:

'My way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf.'
'Macbeth,' v. 3.

You naked trees, whoſe ſhady leaves are
loſt,
Wherein the birds were wont to build
their bower,
And now are cloath'd with moſs and
hoary froſt,
Inſtead of bloſſ'ms, wherewith your buds
did flower;
I ſee your tears, that from your boughs
do rain,
Whoſe drops in dreary icicles remain.

Alſo my luſtful leaf is dry and ſere,
My timely buds with wailing all are
waſted;
The bloſſom, which my branch of youth
did bear,
With breathèd ſighs is blown away, and
blaſted;
And from mine eyes the drizzling tears
deſcend,
As on your boughs the icicles depend.

Thou feeble flock, whoſe fleece is rough
and rent,
Whoſe knees are weak, through faſt and
evil fare;
May'ſt witneſs well by thy ill govern-
ment,
Thy maſter's mind is overcome with care.

Thou weak, I wan: thou lean, I quite forlorn,
With mourning pine I, you with pining mourn.

A thouſand ſithes[9] I curſe that careful hour,
Wherein I long'd the neighbour town to ſee:
And eke ten thouſand ſithes I bleſs the ſtour,[10]
Wherein I ſaw ſo fair a ſight as ſhee.
Yet all for nought: ſuch ſight hath bred my bane:
Ah, God, that love ſhould breed both joy and pain.

It is not *Hobbinol*, wherefore I plain,
Albee[11] my love he ſeek with daily ſuit:
His clowniſh gifts and courteſies I diſdain,
His kids, his cracknels, and his early fruit.
Ah fooliſh *Hobbinol*, thy gifts been[12] vain:
Colin them gives to *Roſalinde* again.

[9] *times.* [10] *fit*, though usually = tempest.
[11] *albeit.* [12] *be* (so throughout).

I love thilke[13] laſs, (alas, why do I love?)
And am forlorn, (alas, why am I lorn?)
She deigns not my goodwill, but doth reprove,
And of my rural muſic holdeth ſcorn.
Shepherd's device ſhe hateth as the ſnake:
And laughs[14] the ſongs that *Colin Clout* doth make.

Wherefore my pipe, albee rude *Pan* thou pleaſe,
Yet for thou pleaſeſt not, where moſt I would:
And thou unlucky Muſe, that wont'ſt to eaſe
My muſing mind, yet canſt not, when thou ſhould:
Both pipe and Muſe ſhall ſore the while abie:[15]
So broke his oaten pipe, and down did lie.

[13] *this.*
[14] *laughs at, ridicules.*
[15] *lie past.*

By that, the welkèd[16] *Phœbus* 'gan avail,[17]
His weary wain, and now the frosty *Night*,
Her mantle black through heaven 'gan overhail ;[18]
Which seen, the pensive boy half in despite
Arose, and homeward drove his sunnèd sheep,
Whose hanging heads did seem his careful[19] case to weep.

2. *APRIL.*

Hobbinol.

Nor this, nor that, so much doth make me mourn,
But for the lad, whom long I loved so dear,
Now loves a lass, that all his love doth scorn :
He plunged in pain, his tressèd locks doth tear.

[16] *waning.* [17] *bring down.*
[18] *draw over.* [19] *full-of-care, ut freq.*

Shepherd's delights he doth them all forſwear;
His pleaſant pipe, which made us merriment,
He wilfully hath broke, and doth forbear
His wonted ſongs, wherein he all outwent.

Thenot.

What is he for a lad, you ſo lament?
Is love ſuch pinching pain to them, that prove?
And hath he ſkill to make[1] ſo excellent,
Yet hath ſo little ſkill to bridle love?

Hobbinol.

Colin, thou kenſt,[2] the Southern ſhepherd's boy:
Him love hath wounded with a deadly dart.
Whilom on him was all my care and joy,
Forcing with gifts to win his wanton heart.

[1] *write poetry.* So 'maker'=a poet.
[2] *knew.*

But now from me his madding mind is ſtart,
And woos the widow's daughter of the glen :
So now fair *Roſalinde* hath bred his ſmart,
So now his friend is changèd for a fren.[3]

3. *JUNE.*

ARGUMENT.

This Eglogue is wholly vowed to the complaining of Colin's *ill ſucceſs in his love. For being (as is aforeſaid) enamoured of a country laſs* Roſalinde, *and having (as ſeemeth) found place in her heart, he lamenteth to his dear friend* Hobbinol, *that he is now forſaken unfaithfully, and in his ſtead* Menalcas, *another ſhepherd, received diſloyally. And this is the whole Argument of this Eglogue.*

[3] *ſtranger.* Hobbinol was Gabriel Harvey.

Do make them muſic, for their more delight:
And *Pan* himſelf to kiſs their cryſtal faces,
Will pipe and dance, when *Phœbe* ſhineth bright:
Such peerleſs pleaſures have we in theſe places.

Colin.

And I, whilſt youth, and courſe of careleſs years,
Did let me walk withouten links of love,
In ſuch delights did joy amongſt my peers;
But riper age ſuch pleaſures doth reprove,
My fancy eke from former follies move
To ſtayèd ſteps; for time in paſſing wears
(As garments doen, which waxen old above)
And draweth new delights with hoary hairs.

Then[9] could I ſing of love, and tune my pipe
Unto my plaintive pleas in verſes made:
Then would I ſeek for Queen-apples unripe,
To give my *Roſalinde*, and in Summer ſhade

[9] Spelled '*tho*' frequently.

Dight[10] gaudy garlands, was my common trade,
To crown her golden locks; but years more ripe,
And loſs of her, whoſe love as life I weigh'd,
Thoſe weary wanton toys away did wipe.

Hobbinol.

Colin, to hear thy rhymes and roundelays,
Which thou were wont on waſteful hills to ſing,
I more delight, than lark in Summer days:
Whoſe echo made the neighbour groves to ring,
And taught the birds, which in the lower ſpring[11]
Did ſhroud in ſhady leaves from ſunny rays;
Frame to thy ſong their cheerful chirrupping,
Or hold their peace, for ſhame of thy ſweet lays.

[10] *arrayed.* [11] *grove.*

I ſaw *Calliope* with Muſes moe,[12]
Soon as thy oaten pipe began to ſound,
Their ivory lutes and tambourines forego:
And from the fountain, where they ſat around,
Run after haſtily thy ſilver ſound.
But when they came, where thou thy ſkill didſt ſhow,
They drew aback, as half with ſhame confound,
Shepherd to ſee, them in their art out-go.

Colin.

Of Muſes, *Hobbinol*, I con[13] no ſkill,
For they been daughters of the higheſt *Jove*,
And holden ſcorn of homely ſhepherd's quill:
For ſith I heard, that *Pan* with *Phœbus* ſtrove,
Which him to much rebuke and danger drove;
I never liſt preſume to *Parnaſſe* hill,
But piping low in ſhade of lowly grove,
I play to pleaſe myſelf, albeit ill.

[12] *more.* [13] *know.*

Nought weigh I, who my ſong doth
praiſe or blame,
Ne ſtrive to win renown, or paſs the reſt:
With ſhepherds fits not, follow flying
fame;
But feed his flock in fields, where falls
them beſt.
I wot my rhymes been rough, and rudely
dreſt,
The fitter they, my careful[14] caſe to
frame:
Enough is me to paint out my unreſt,
And pour my piteous plaints out in the
ſame.

The god of ſhepherds *Tityrus*[15] is dead,
Who taught me homely, as I can, to
make[16]:
He, whilſt he livèd, was the ſovereign
head
Of ſhepherds all, that been with love
ytake.
Well could he wail his woes, and lightly
ſlake
The flames, which love within his heart
had bred,
And tell us merry tales, to keep us wake,
The while our ſheep about us ſafely fed.

[14] *anxious*, as before. [15] *Chaucer.*
[16] *compose.*

Now dead he is, and lieth wrapt in lead,
(O why ſhould death on him ſuch outrage ſhow?)
And all his paſſing ſkill with him is fled,
The fame whereof doth daily greater grow.
But if on me ſome little drops would flow,
Of that the ſpring was in his learnèd head,
I ſoon would learn theſe woods to wail my woe,
And teach the trees their trickling tears to ſhed.

Then ſhould my plaints, cauſ'd of diſcourteſy,
As meſſengers of all my plainful plight,
Fly to my love, wherever that ſhe be,
And pierce her heart with point of worthy wite:[17]
As ſhe deſerves, that wrought ſo deadly ſpite.
And thou *Menalcas*, that by treachery
Didſt underfong[18] my laſs, to wax ſo light,
Shouldſt well be known for ſuch thy villainy.

[17] Spelled '*wight*' = reproach?
[18] *circumvent.*

But ſince I am not, as I wiſh I were,
Ye gentle ſhepherds, which your flocks do feed,
Whether on hills, or dales, or other where,
Bear witneſs all of this ſo wicked deed:
And tell the laſs, whoſe flower is woxe[19] a weed,
And faultleſs faith is turned to faithleſs fear;
That ſhe the trueſt ſhepherd's heart made bleed,
That lives on earth, and lovèd her moſt dear.

Hobbinol.

O careful[20] *Colin*, I lament thy caſe,
Thy tears would make the hardeſt flint to flow.
Ah, faithleſs *Roſalinde*, and void of grace,
That art the root of all this ruthful woe.
But now is time, I gueſs, homeward to go:
Then riſe, ye bleſſed flock, and home apace,
Leſt night with ſtealing ſteps do you foreflow,
And wet your tender lambs, that by you trace.[21]

[19] *become.* [20] *full of care.* [21] *follow.*

4. *AUGUST.*

Perigot. It fell upon a holy eve,
Willy. hey ho holiday!
Per. When holy fathers wont to ſhrive:
Will. now 'ginneth this roundelay:
Per. Sitting upon a hill ſo high,
Will. hey ho the high hill!
Per. The while my flock did feed thereby,
Will. the while the ſhepherd ſelf did ſpill:
Per. I ſaw the bouncing Bellibone:[1]
Will. hey ho Bonnibell!
Per. Tripping over the dale alone,
Will. ſhe can trip it very well:
Per. Well deckèd in a frock of gray,
Will. hey ho gray is greet![2]
Per. And in a kirtle of green ſay,[3]
Will. the green is for maidens meet:
Per. A chapelet on her head ſhe wore,
Will. hey ho chapelet!
Per. Of ſweet violets therein was ſtore,
Will. ſhe ſweeter than the violet.

[1] *fair maid.* [2] *weeping.* [3] *ſilk.*

Per. My ſheep did leave their wonted food,
Will. hey ho ſilly ſheep!
Per. And gaz'd on her, as they were wood,[4]
Will. Wood as he, that did them keep.
Per. As the bonny laſs paſſed by,
Will. hey ho bonny laſs!
Per. She rov'd at me with glancing eye,
Will. as clear as the cryſtal glaſs:
Per. All as the ſunny beam ſo bright,
Will. hey ho the ſunny beam!
Per. Glanceth from *Phœbus'* face forthright,
Will. ſo love into my heart did ſtream:
Per. Or as the thunder cleaves the clouds,
Will. hey ho the thunder!
Per. Wherein the lightſome levin ſhrouds,
Will. ſo cleaves thy ſoul aſunder:
Per. Or as Dame *Cynthia's* ſilver ray
Will. hey ho the moonlight!
Per. Upon the glittering wave doth play:
Will. ſuch play is a piteous plight.

[4] *wild, mad.*

Per. The glance into my heart did glide,
Will. hey ho the glider!
Per. Therewith my ſoul was ſharply gride,[5]
Will. ſuch wounds ſoon waxen wider.
Per. Haſting to raunch[6] the arrow out,
Will. hey ho Perigot!
Per. I left the head in my heart root:
Will. it was a deſperate ſhot.
Per. There it rankleth aye more and more,
Will. hey ho the arrow!
Per. Ne can I find ſalve for my ſore:
Will. love is a cureleſs ſorrow.
Per. And though my bale with death I bought,
Will. hey ho heavy cheer!
Per. Yet ſhould thilke laſs not from my thought;
Will. ſo you may buy gold too dear.
Per. But whether in painful love I pine,
Will. hey ho pinching pain!
Per. Or thrive in wealth, ſhe ſhall be mine.
Will. But if thou can her obtain.

[5] *pierced.* [6] *wrench.*

Per. And if for graceleſs grief I die,
Will. hey ho graceleſs grief!
Per. Witneſs, ſhe ſlew me with her eye:
Will. let thy folly be the prieſe.[7]
Per. And you, that ſaw it, ſimple ſheep,
Will. hey ho the fair flock!
Per. For prieſe thereof, my death ſhall weep,
Will. and moan with many a mock.
Per. So learn'd I love on a holy eve,
Will. hey ho holy day!
Per. That ever ſince my heart did grieve.
Will. now endeth our roundelay.

5. *NOVEMBER.*

Thenot, Colin.

Colin, my dear, when ſhall it pleaſe thee ſing,
As thou wert wont, ſongs of ſome jouiſance?
Thy Muſe too long ſlumb'reth in ſorrowing,
Lullèd aſleep through love's miſgovernance.

[7] *proof.*

Now ſomewhat ſing, whoſe endleſs
ſovenance,[1]
Among the ſhepherds' ſwains may aye
remain:
Whether thee liſt thy lovèd laſs advance
Or honour *Pan* with hymns of higher,
vein.

Colin.

Thenot, now nis[2] the time of merrymake,
Nor *Pan* to herie,[3] nor with love to
play:
Sike mirth in May is meeteſt for to make,
Or ſummer ſhade under the cockèd hay.
But now ſad Winter welked[4] hath the
day,
And *Phœbus* weary of his yearly taſk,
Yſtabled hath his ſteeds in lowly lea,
And taken up his inn in fiſh's haſk.[5]
This ſullen ſeaſon ſadder plight doth aſk,
And loatheth ſuch delights as thou doſt
praiſe:
The mournful Muſe in mirth now liſt
ne maſk,
As ſhe was wont in youth and ſummer
days.

[1] *remembrance.* [2] *is not.* [3] *worship.*
[4] *shortened.* [5] *wicker fish-basket.*

But if thou algate luſt light virelayes,[6]
And looſer ſongs of love to underſong:[7]
Who but thyſelf deſerves like Poet's praiſe?
Relieve thy oaten pipes, that ſleepen long.

Thenot.

The nightingale is ſovereign of ſong,
Before him fits[8] the titmouſe[9] ſilent be:
And I unfit to thruſt in ſkilful throng,
Should *Colin* make judge of my foolery.
Nay, better learn of them, that learnèd be,
And have been wat'red at the Muſes' well:
The kindly dew drops from the higher tree,
And wets the little plants that lowly dwell.
But if ſad Winter's wrath, and ſeaſon chill,
Accord not with thy Muſe's merriment;
To ſadder times thou may'ſt attune thy quill,
And ſing of ſorrow and death's dreariment.

[6] *light songs.* [7] *surprise.*
[8] *befits, becomes* (Fr. *il vous sied*). So used by Chapman. [9] *hedge-sparrow.*

For dead is *Dido*, dead, alas, and drent,[10]
Dido the great ſhepherd his daughter ſheene:[11]
The faireſt May ſhe was that ever went,
Her like ſhe has not left behind I weene.
And if thou wilt bewail my woeful teen,[12]
I ſhall thee give yond coſſet[13] for thy pain:
And if thy rhymes as round and rueful been,
As thoſe that did thy *Roſalinde* complain,
Much greater gifts for guerdon thou ſhalt gain,
Than kid or coſſet, which I thee benempt:[14]
Then up, I ſay, thou jolly ſhepherd ſwain;
Let not my ſmall demand be ſo contempt.[15]

6. *DECEMBER.*

ARGUMENT.

This Eglogue (even as the firſt began) is ended with a complaint of Colin to god

[10] *drowned.* [11] *fair.*
[12] *ſorrow.* [13] *kind of lamb.*
[14] *benamed.* [15] *deſpiſed.*

Pan, wherein as weary of his former ways, he proportioneth his life to the four ſeaſons of the year, comparing his youth to the Springtime, when he was freſh and free from love's folly. His manhood to the Summer, which he ſaith, was conſumed with great heat and exceſſive drouth, cauſed through a comet or blazing ſtar, by which he meaneth love; which paſſion is commonly compared to ſuch flames and immoderate heat. His riper years he reſembleth to an unſeaſonable harveſt, wherein the fruits fall ere they be ripe. His latter age to Winter's chill and froſty ſeaſon now drawing near to his laſt end.

The gentle ſhepherd ſate beſiden ſpring,
All in the ſhadow of a buſhy briar,
That *Colin* hight, which well could pipe and ſing,
For he of *Tityrus* his ſongs did lere :[1]
There, as he ſate in ſecret ſhade alone,
Thus 'gan he make of love his piteous moan.

[1] *learn.*

O ſovereign *Pan*, thou god of ſhepherds all,
Which of our tender lambkins takeſt keep:
And when our flocks into miſchance might fall,
Doſt ſave from miſchief the unwary ſheep.
Als of their maſters haſt no leſs regard,
Than of the flocks, which thou doſt watch and ward.

I thee beſeech[2] (ſo be thou deign to hear,
Rude ditties tun'd to ſhepherd's oaten reed,
Or if I ever ſonnet ſung ſo clear,
As it with pleaſance might thy fancy feed)
Hearken awhile from thy green cabinet,
The laurel ſong of careful Colinet.

Whilom in youth, when flow'red my joyful Spring,
Like ſwallow ſwift, I wand'red here and there:
For heat of heedleſs luſt me ſo did ſting,
That I of doubted danger had no fear.

[2] Literally translated from Marot. See Warton, i. 299.

I went the waſteful woods and foreſt wide,
Withouten dread of wolves to been eſpide.

I wont to range amid the mazy thicket,
And gather nuts to make me Chriſtmas game:
And joyed oft to chaſe the trembling pricket,[3]
Or hunt the heartleſs hare, till ſhe were tame.
What reckèd I of wintry age's waſte?
Then deemèd I my Spring would ever laſt.

How often have I ſcaled the craggy oak,
All to diſlodge the raven of her neſt?
How have I wearied with many a ſtroke
The ſtately walnut-tree, the while the reſt
Under the tree fell all for nuts at ſtrife?
For ylike to me was liberty and life.

[3] *deer.*

And for I was in thilke ſame looſer years,
(Whether the Muſe, ſo wrought me from my birth:
Or I too much believed my ſhepherd peers)
Somedele[4] ybent to ſong and muſic's mirth;
A good old ſhepherd, *Wrenock* was his name,
Made me by art more cunning in the ſame.

From thence I durſt in daring to compare
With ſhepherd's ſwain, whatever fed in field:
And if that *Hobbinol* right judgment bare,
To *Pan*, his own ſelf pipe, I need not yield.
For if the flocking nymphs did follow *Pan*,
The wiſer Muſes after *Colin* ran.

But ah, ſuch pride at length was ill repaid,
The ſhepherd's god (perdy[5] god was he none)
My hurtleſs pleaſance did me ill upbraid,
My freedom lorn, my life he left to moan.

[4] *somewhat.* [5] *truly.*

Love they him called, that gave me checkmate,
But better might they have behote[6] him Hate.

Then 'gan my lovely Spring bid me farewell,
And Summer ſeaſon ſped him to diſplay
(For love then in the Lion's houſe did dwell)
The raging fire, that kindled at his ray.
A comet ſtirr'd up that unkindly heat,
That reignèd (as men ſaid) in *Venus'* ſeat.

Forth was I led, not as I wont afore,
When choice I had to chooſe my wand'ring way:
But whither luck and love's unbridled lore
Would lead me forth on Fancy's bit to play;
The buſh my bed, the bramble was my bower,
The woods can witneſs many a woeful ſtoure.[7]

[6] *benamed.* [7] *fit*, as before.

Where I was wont to ſeek the honey-bee,
Working her formal rooms in waxen frame:
The griſly[8] toadſtool grown there might I ſee,
And loathing paddocks[9] lording on the ſame.
And where the chanting birds lull'd me aſleep,
The ghaſtly owl her grievous inn doth keep.

Then as the Spring gives place to elder time,
And bringeth forth the fruit of Summer's pride;
Alſo my age now paſſed youthly prime,
To things of riper reaſon ſelf applied,
And learn'd of lighter timber cotes to frame,
Such as might ſave my ſheep and me from ſhame.

[8] *horrible, nasty.*

[9] *frogs.* 'Toads and frogs do participate of this natural property, that when they sit they hold their heads steady and without motion, which stately action Spenser in his 'Shepherd's Calendar' called the "lording of the frogs"' (Gwillim, 'Display of Heraldrie').

To make fine cages for the nightingale,
And baſkets of bulruſhes was my wont;
Who to entrap the fiſh in winding ſale,[10]
Was better ſeen, or hurtful beaſts to hunt?
I learned als the ſigns of heaven to ken,
How *Phœbe* fails, where *Venus* ſits, and when.

And tried time yet taught me greater things,
The ſudden riſing of the raging ſeas;
The ſooth[11] of birds by beating of their wings,
The power of herbs, both which can hurt and eaſe:
And which be wont t'enrage the reſtleſs ſheep,
And which be wont to work eternal ſleep.

But ah, unwiſe and witleſs *Colin Clout*,
That kydſt[12] the hidden kinds of many a weed,
Yet kydſt not one to cure thy ſore heart-root,
Whoſe rankling wound as yet does rifely bleed.

[10] *ſallow* or *willow*. [11] *ſoothsaying*. [12] *knewest*.

Why liveſt thou ſtill, and yet haſt thy death's wound?
Why dieſt thou ſtill, and yet alive art found?

Thus is my Summer worn away and waſted,
Thus is my harveſt haſtened all too rathe:[13]
The ear that budded fair is burnt and blaſted,
And all my hopèd gain is turn'd to ſcathe.
Of all the ſeed, that in my youth was ſown,
Was nought but brakes and brambles to be mown.

My boughs with bloſſoms that crowned were at firſt,
And promiſèd of timely fruit ſuch ſtore;
Are left both bare and barren now at erſt,
The flattering fruit is fallen to ground before,
And rotted, ere they were half mellow ripe:
My harveſt waſte, my hope away did wipe.

[13] *early.*

The fragrant flowers, that in my garden grew,
Been withered as they had been gathered long:
Their roots been dried up for lack of dew,
Yet dewed with tears they have been ever among.
Ah, who has wrought my *Roſalinde* this ſpite,
To ſpill the flowers, that ſhould her garland dight?

And I that whilom wont to frame my pipe,
Unto the ſhifting of the ſhepherd's foot:
Such follies now have gathered as too ripe,
And caſt them out, as rotten and unſoote.[14]
The loſer[15] laſs I caſt to pleaſe no more,
One if I pleaſe, enough is me therefore.

[14] *unsweet.*
[15] Query 'lover,' hardly = looser?

And thus of all my harveſt hope I have
Nought reapèd but a weedy crop of care:
Which, when I thought have threſht in ſwelling ſheave,
Cockle for corn, and chaff for barley bare.
Soon as the chaff ſhould in the fan be fin'd,[16]
All was blown away of the wavering wind.

So now my year draws to his latter term,
My Spring if ſpent, my Summer burnt up quite;
My harveſt haſtes to ſtir up Winter ſtern,
And bids him claim with rigorous rage his right.
So now he ſtorms with many a ſturdy ſtoure,[17]
So now his bluſt'ring blaſt each coaſt doth ſcour.

The careful cold hath nipt my rugged rind,
And in my face deep furrows eld hath pight:[18]
My head beſprent with hoary froſt I find,
And by mine eye the crow his claw doth write;

[16] *winnowed.* [17] *tempest.* [18] *planted.*

Delight is laid abed, and pleaſure paſt;
No ſun now ſhines, clouds have all overcaſt.

Now leave ye ſhepherds' boys your merry glee,
My Muſe is hoarſe and weary of this ſtound;[19]
Here will I hang my pipe upon this tree:
Was never pipe of reed did better ſound.
Winter is come, that blows the bitter blaſt,
And after Winter dreary death does haſte.

Gather ye together my little flock,
My little flock, that was to me moſt lief:[20]
Let me, ah let me in your folds ye lock,
Ere the breme[21] Winter breed you greater grief.
Winter is come, that blows the baleful breath,
And after Winter cometh timely death.

[19] *ſtinging pain.* [20] *dear.*
[21] *ſharp and bitter.*

Adieu delights, that lullèd me aſleep,
Adieu, my dear, whoſe love I bought ſo dear:
Adieu, my little lambs and lovèd ſheep,
Adieu, ye woods, that oft my witneſs were:
Adieu, good *Hobbinol*, that was ſo true,
Tell *Roſalinde*, her *Colin* bids her adieu.

II. HYMNS OF LOVE AND BEAUTY.

The 'Fovvre Hymns' made by Edm. Spenſer were originally publiſhed in 1596, *'Printed for William Ponſonby.' They are introduced by Spenſer as belonging to 'the greener times of my youth.' But obſerves Profeſſor Palgrave, of Oxford (Works, as before, vol. iv., p. xcvii., in 'Eſſay on the Minor Poems of Spenſer,' contributed to our edition), 'looking at their magnificently ſuſtained power and perfection in ſtyle, we might reaſonably interpret the phraſe of* 1596 *as referring to a date between* 1578 *and* 1582.'

We give three out of the four Hymns. But, again quoting Profeſſor Palgrave, we hold it 'as, for the moſt part, a poetical device, a trick of fine art, by which Spenſer, in the prefatory letter to his fair and noble friends, ſets forth theſe two later Hymns as a ſort of retractation or palinode in regard of the two earlier. For the Heavenly Love leaves all that he had ſung of human love intact, while carrying on the theme into higher and greater regions' (ibid., pp. xcix-c). As an example of the poet's gracious proſe, we prefix the dedicatory letter of theſe Hymns.—G.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND MOST VIRTUOUS LADIES, THE LADY MARGARET COUNTESS OF CUMBERLAND, AND THE LADY MARY COUNTESS OF WARWICK.

Having in the greener times of my youth, compoſed theſe former two Hymns in the praiſe of Love and Beauty, and finding that the ſame too much pleaſed thoſe of like age and diſpoſition, which being too vehemently carried with that kind of affection, do rather ſuck out poiſon to their ſtrong paſſion, than honey to their honeſt delight, I was moved by the one of you two moſt excellent Ladies, to call

in the ſame. But being unable ſo to do, by reaſon that many copies thereof were formerly ſcattered abroad, I reſolved at leaſt to amend, and by way of retractation to reform them, making inſtead of thoſe two Hymns of earthly or natural love and beauty, two others of heavenly and celeſtial. The which I do dedicate jointly unto you two honourable ſiſters, as to the moſt excellent and rare ornaments of all true love and beauty, both in the one and the other kind, humbly beſeeching you to vouchſafe the patronage of them, and to accept this my humble ſervice, in lieu of the great graces and honourable favours which ye daily ſhow unto me, until ſuch time as I may by better means yield you ſome more notable teſtimony of my thankful mind and dutiful devotion.

And even ſo I pray for your happineſs.

Greenwich this firſt of September,
1596.

Your Honours' moſt bounden ever
in all humble ſervice.

ED. SP.

AN HYMN IN HONOUR OF LOVE.

Love, that long ſince haſt to thy mighty power,
Perforce ſubdued my poor captivèd heart,
And raging now therein with reſtleſs ſtoure,[1]
Doſt tyrannize in every weaker part;
Fain would I ſeek to eaſe my bitter ſmart,
By any ſervice I might do to thee,
Or ought that elſe might to thee pleaſing be.

And now t'aſſuage the force of this new flame,
And make thee more propitious in my need,
I mean to ſing the praiſes of thy name,
And thy victorious conqueſts to aread;[2]
By which thou madeſt many hearts to bleed
Of mighty Victors, with wide wounds embrued,
And by thy cruel darts to thee ſubdued.

[1] *tempest.* [2] *declare.*

Only I fear my wits enfeeblèd late,
Through the ſharp ſorrows which thou haſt me bred,
Should faint, and words ſhould fail me, to relate
The wondrous triumphs of thy great godhead.
But if thou wouldſt vouchſafe to over-ſpread
Me with the ſhadow of thy gentle wing,
I ſhould enabled be thy acts to ſing.

Come then, O come, thou mighty god of Love,
Out of thy ſilver bowers and ſecret bliſs,
Where thou doſt ſit in *Venus'* lap above,
Bathing thy wings in her ambroſial kiſs,
That ſweeter far than any nectar is;
Come ſoftly, and my feeble breaſt inſpire
With gentle fury, kindled of thy fire.

And ye ſweet Muſes, which have often proved
The piercing points of his avengeful darts:
And ye fair Nymphs, which oftentimes have loved
The cruel worker of your kindly ſmarts,
Prepare yourſelves, and open wide your hearts,

For to receive the triumph of your glory,
That made you merry oft, when ye were ſorry.

And ye fair bloſſoms of youth's wanton breed,
Which in the conqueſts of your beauty boaſt,
Wherewith your lovers' feeble eyes you feed,
But ſtarve their hearts, that needeth nurture moſt;
Prepare yourſelves, to march amongſt his hoſt,
And all the way this ſacred hymn do ſing,
Made in the honour of your ſovereign king.

Great god of might, that reigneſt in the mind,
And all the body to thy heſt doſt frame,
Victor of gods, ſubduer of mankind,
That doſt the lions and fell tigers tame,
Making their cruel rage thy ſcornful game,
And in their roaring taking great delight;
Who can expreſs the glory of thy might?

Or who alive can perfectly declare,
The wondrous cradle of thine infancy?
When thy great mother *Venus* firſt thee bare,
Begot of Plenty and of Penury,
Though elder than thine own nativity;
And yet a child, renewing ſtill thy years;
And yet the eldeſt of the heavenly peers.

For ere this world's ſtill-moving mighty maſs,
Out of great *Chaos'* ugly priſon crept,
In which his goodly face long hidden was
From heaven's view, and in deep darkneſs kept;
Love, that had now long time ſecurely ſlept
In *Venus'* lap, unarmèd then and naked,
'Gan rear his head, by *Clotho* being wakèd.

And taking to him wings of his own heat,
Kindled at firſt from heaven's life-giving fire,
He 'gan to move out of his idle ſeat,
Weakly at firſt, but after with deſire
Lifted aloft, he 'gan to mount up higher,[3]

[3] Spelled '*hyre.*'

And like freſh eagle, make his hardy flight
Through all that great wide waſte, yet wanting light.

Yet wanting light to guide his wand'ring way,
His own fair mother, for all creatures' ſake,
Did lend him light from her own goodly ray:
Then through the world his way he 'gan to take,
The world that was not till he did it make;
Whoſe ſundry parts he from themſelves did ſever,
The which before had lain confuſèd ever.

The earth, the air, the water, and the fire,
Then 'gan to range themſelves in huge array,
And with contrary forces to conſpire
Each againſt other, by all means they may,
Threat'ning their own confuſion and decay:
Air hated earth, and water hated fire,
Till Love relented their rebellious ire.

He then them took, and tempering goodly well
Their contrary diſlikes with lovèd means,
Did place them all in order, and compel
To keep themſelves within their ſundry reigns,
Together linkt with adamantine chains;
Yet ſo, as that in every living wight
They mix themſelves, and ſhow their kindly might.

So ever ſince they firmly have remained,
And duly well obſervèd his beheſt;
Through which now all theſe things that are contained
Within this goodly cope, both moſt and leaſt
Their being have, and daily are increaſt,
Through ſecret ſparks of his infuſèd fire,
Which in the barren cold he doth inſpire.

Thereby they all do live, and movèd are
To multiply the likeneſs of their kind,
Whilſt they ſeek only, without further care,
To quench the flame, which they in burning find:
But man, that breathes a more immortal mind,

Not for luſt's ſake, but for eternity,
Seeks to enlarge his laſting progeny.

For having yet in his deducted[4] ſprite,
Some ſparks remaining of that heavenly fire,
He is enlumin'd with that goodly light,
Unto like goodly ſemblant to aſpire:
Therefore in choice of love, he doth deſire
That ſeems on earth moſt heavenly, to embrace:
That ſame is Beauty, born of heavenly race.

For ſure of all that in this mortal frame
Containèd is, nought more divine doth ſeem,
Or that reſembleth more th' immortal flame
Of heavenly light, than Beauty's glorious beam.
What wonder then, if with ſuch rage extreme
Frail men, whoſe eyes ſeek heavenly things to ſee,
At ſight thereof ſo much enraviſht be?

[4] *dejected, fallen.*

Which well perceiving, that imperious boy,
Doth therewith tip his ſharp empoiſoned darts;
Which glancing through the eyes with countenance coy,
Reſt not, till they have pierc'd the trembling hearts,
And kindled flame in all their inner parts,
Which ſucks the blood, and drinketh up the life
Of careful wretches with conſuming grief.

Thenceforth they plain, and make full piteous moan
Unto the author of their baleful bane:
The days they waſte, the nights they grieve and groan,
Their lives they loath, and heaven's light diſdain;
No light but that, whoſe lamp doth yet remain
Freſh-burning in the image of their eye,
They deign to ſee, and ſeeing it ſtill die.

The whilſt thou tyrant Love doſt laugh and ſcorn
At their complaints, making their pain thy play;
Whilſt they lie languiſhing like thralls forlorn,
The whiles thou doſt triumph in their decay,
And otherwhiles, their dying to delay,
Thou doſt emmarble[5] the proud heart of her,
Whoſe love before their life they do prefer.

So haſt thou often done (aye me the more!)
To me thy vaſſal, whoſe yet bleeding heart,
With thouſand wounds thou mangled haſt ſo ſore
That whole remains ſcarce any little part;
Yet to augment the anguiſh of my ſmart,
Thou haſt enfrozen her diſdainful breaſt,
That no one drop of pity there doth reſt.

[5] *harden.*

Why then do I this honour unto thee,
Thus to ennoble thy victorious name,
Since thou doſt ſhow no favour unto me,
Ne once move ruth in that rebellious dame,
Somewhat to ſlack the rigour of my flame?
Certes ſmall glory doſt thou win hereby,
To let her live thus free, and me to die.

But if thou be indeed, as men thee call,
The world's great parent, the moſt kind preſerver
Of living wights, the ſovereign Lord of all;
How falls it then, that with thy furious fervour,
Thou doſt afflict as well the not deſerver,
As him that doth thy lovely heſts deſpiſe,
And on thy ſubjects moſt doſt tyrannize?

Yet herein eke thy glory ſeemeth more,
By ſo hard handling thoſe which beſt thee ſerve,
That ere thou doſt them unto grace reſtore,
Thou mayſt well try if they will ever ſwerve,
And mayſt them make it better to deſerve,

And having got it, may it more eſteem ;
For things hard gotten, men more dearly deem.[6]

So hard thoſe heavenly beauties be enfired,
As things divine, leaſt paſſions do impreſs,
The more of ſteadfaſt minds to be admired,
The more they ſtayèd be on ſteadfaſtneſs.
But baſeborn minds ſuch lamps regard the leſs,
Which at firſt blowing take not haſty fire :
Such fancies feel no love, but looſe deſire.

For Love is lord of truth and loyalty,
Lifting himſelf out of the lowly duſt,
On golden plumes up to the pureſt ſky,
Above the reach of loathly ſinful luſt,
Whoſe baſe affect through cowardly diſtruſt
Of his weak wings, dare not to heaven fly,
But like a moldwarpe[7] in the earth doth lie.

[6] *judge, esteem.* [7] *mole.*

His dunghill thoughts, which do themſelves enure
To dirty droſs, no higher dare aſpire,
Ne can his feeble earthly eyes endure
The flaming light of that celeſtial fire,
Which kindleth love in generous deſire,
And makes him mount above the native might
Of heavy earth, up to the heaven's height.

Such is the power of that ſweet paſſion,
That it all ſordid baſeneſs doth expel,
And the refinèd mind doth newly faſhion
Unto a fairer form, which now doth dwell
In his high thought, that would itſelf excel;
Which he beholding ſtill with conſtant ſight,
Admires the mirror of ſo heavenly light.

Whoſe image printing in his deepeſt wit,
He thereon feeds his hungry fantaſy,
Still full, yet never ſatisfied with it,
Like *Tantall*, that in ſtore doth ſtarvèd lie:
So doth he pine in moſt ſatiety,

For nought may quench his infinite deſire,
Once kindled through that firſt conceivèd fire.

Thereon his mind affixèd wholly is,
Ne thinks on aught, but how it to attain;
His care, his joy, his hope is all on this,
That ſeems in it all bliſſes to contain,
In ſight whereof, all other bliſs ſeems vain.
Thrice happy man, might he the ſame poſſeſs,
He feigns himſelf, and doth his fortune bleſs.

And though he do not win his wiſh to end,
Yet thus far happy he himſelf doth ween,
That heavens ſuch happy grace did to him lend,
As thing on earth ſo heavenly, to have ſeen,
His heart's enſhrinèd ſaint, his heaven's queen,
Fairer than faireſt, in his fayning[8] eye,
Whoſe ſole aſpect he counts felicity.

[8] *imagining.* Cf. p. 55, l. 14.

Then forth he caſts in his unquiet thought,
What he may do, her favour to obtain;
What brave exploit, what peril hardly wrought,
What puiſſant conqueſt, what adventurous pain,
May pleaſe her beſt, and grace unto him gain:
He dreads no danger, nor misfortune fears,
His faith, his fortune, in his breaſt he bears.

Thou art his god, thou art his mighty guide,
Thou being blind, let'ſt him not ſee his fears,
But carrieſt him to that which he hath eyed,
Through ſeas, through flames, through thouſand ſwords and ſpears:
Ne aught ſo ſtrong that may his force withſtand,
With which thou armeſt his reſiſtleſs hand.

Witneſs *Leander*, in the Euxine waves,
And ſtout *Æneas* in the Trojan fire,
Achilles preſſing through the Phrygian glaives,[9]
And *Orpheus* daring to provoke the ire
Of damnèd fiends, to get his love retire:
For both through heaven and hell thou makeſt way,
To win them worſhip which to thee obey.

And if by all theſe perils and theſe pains,
He may but purchaſe liking in her eye,
What heavens of joy, then to himſelf he feigns,
Eftſoons he wipes quite out of memory,
Whatever ill before he did aby;[10]
Had it been death, yet would he die again,
To live thus happy as her grace to gain.

Yet when he hath found favour to his will,
He nathmore[11] can ſo contented reſt,
But forceth further on, and ſtriveth ſtill
T' approach more near, till in her inmoſt breaſt,
He may emboſom'd be, and lovèd beſt;

[9] *swords.* [10] *abide.* [11] *none the more.*

And yet not beſt, but to be lov'd alone,
For Love cannot endure a paragon.

The fear whereof, O how doth it torment
His troubled mind, with more than helliſh pain!
And to his faining fancy repreſent
Sights never ſeen, and thouſand ſhadows vain,
To break his ſleep, and waſte his idle brain;
Thou that haſt never lov'd canſt not believe,
Leaſt part of th' evils which poor lovers grieve.

The gnawing envy, the heart-fretting fear,
The vain ſurmiſes, the diſtruſtful ſhows,
The falſe reports that flying tales do bear,
The doubts, the dangers, the delays, the woes,
The feignèd friends, the unaſſurèd foes,
With thouſands more than any tongue can tell,
Do make a lover's life a wretch's hell.

Yet is there one more curſèd than they all,
That cankerworm, that monſter Jealouſy,
Which eats the heart, and feeds upon the gall,
Turning all Love's delight to miſery,
Through fear of loſing his felicity.
Ah gods, that ever ye that monſter placed
In gentle Love, that all his joys dèfaced.

By theſe, O Love, thou doſt thy entrance make,
Unto thy heaven, and doſt the more endear,
Thy pleaſures unto thoſe which them partake,
As after ſtorms when clouds begin to clear,
The ſun more bright and glorious doth appear;
So thou thy folk, through pains of Purgatory,
Doſt bear unto thy bliſs, and heaven's glory.

There thou them placeſt in a Paradiſe
Of all delight, and joyous happy reſt,
Where they do feed on nectar heavenly wiſe,
With *Hercules* and *Hebe*, and the reſt
Of *Venus'* dearlings, through her bounty bleſt,

And lie like gods in ivory beds array'd,
With roſe and lilies over them diſplay'd.

There with thy daughter *Pleaſure* they do play
Their hurtleſs ſports, without rebuke or blame,
And in her ſnowy boſom boldly lay
Their quiet heads, devoid of guilty ſhame:
After full joyance of their gentle game,
Then her they crown their goddeſs and their queen,
And deck with flowers thy altars well beſeen.

Ay me, dear lord, that ever I might hope,
For all the pains and woes that I endure,
To come at length unto the wiſhèd ſcope
Of my deſire, or might myſelf aſſure,
That happy port for ever to recure.
Then would I think theſe pains no pains at all,
And all my woes to be but penance ſmall.

Then would I ſing of thine immortal
praiſe
An heavenly Hymn, ſuch as the angels
ſing,
And thy triumphant name then would I
raiſe
'Bove all the gods, thee only honouring,
My guide, my god, my victor, and my
king;
Till then, dread lord, vouchſafe to take
of me
This ſimple ſong, thus fram'd in praiſe
of thee.

AN HYMN IN HONOUR OF BEAUTY.

Ah whither, Love, wilt thou now carry
me?
What wontleſs fury doſt thou now inſpire
Into my feeble breaſt, too full of thee?
Whilſt ſeeking to aſſake thy raging fire,
Thou in me kindleſt much more great
deſire,
And up aloft above my ſtrength doſt raiſe
The wondrous matter of my fire to
praiſe.

That as I erſt in praiſe of thine own name,
So now in honour of thy mother dear,
An honourable Hymn I eke ſhould frame,
And with the brightneſs of her beauty clear,
The raviſht hearts of gazeful men might rear,
To admiration of that heavenly light,
From whence proceeds ſuch ſoul-enchanting might.

There to do thou great goddeſs, Queen of Beauty,
Mother of Love, and of all world's delight,
Without whoſe ſovereign grace and kindly duty,
Nothing on earth ſeems fair to fleſhly ſight,
Do thou vouchſafe with thy love-kindling light,
T' illuminate my dim and dullèd eyne,
And beautify this ſacred hymn of thine.

That both to thee, to whom I mean it moſt,
And eke to her, whoſe fair immortal beam,
Hath darted fire into my feeble ghoſt,
That now it waſted is with woes extreme;
It may ſo pleaſe that ſhe at length will ſtream
Some dew of grace, into my withered heart,
After long ſorrow and conſuming ſmart.

What time this world's great Workmaſter did caſt
To make all things, ſuch as we now behold:
It ſeems that He before His eyes had plac'd
A goodly pattern, to whoſe perfect mould,
He faſhioned them as comely as He could,
That now ſo fair and ſeemly they appear,
As nought may be amended anywhere.

That wondrous pattern whereſoe'er it be,
Whether in earth laid up in ſecret ſtore,
Or elſe in heaven, that no man may it ſee
With ſinful eyes, for fear it to deflore,[1]
Is perfect Beauty, which all men adore;

[1] *deflower.*

Whoſe face and feature doth ſo much excel
All mortal ſenſe, that none the ſame may tell.

Thereof as every earthly thing partakes,
Or more or leſs by influence divine,
So it more fair accordingly it makes,
And the groſs matter of this earthly mine,
Which clotheth it, thereafter doth refine,
Doing away the droſs which dims the light
Of that fair beam, which therein is empight.[2]

For through infuſion of celeſtial power,
The duller earth it quick'neth with delight,
And life-full ſpirits privily doth pour
Through all the parts, that to the looker's ſight
They ſeem to pleaſe. That is thy ſovereign might,
O *Cyprian* Queen, which flowing from the beam
Of thy bright ſtar, thou into them doſt ſtream.

[2] *pitched.*

That is the thing which giveth pleaſant
grace
To all things fair, that kindleth lively
fire,
Light of thy lamp, which ſhining in the
face,
Thence to the ſoul darts amorous
deſire,
And robs the hearts of thoſe which it
admire:
Therewith thou pointeſt thy ſon's
poiſ'ned arrow,
That wounds the life, and waſtes the
inmoſt marrow.

How vainly then do idle wits invent,
That Beauty is nought elſe, but mixture
made
Of colours fair, and goodly temp'ra-
ment
Of pure complexions, that ſhall quickly
fade
And paſs away, like to a Summer's
ſhade,
Or that it is but comely compoſition
Of parts well meaſur'd, with meet diſpo-
ſition.

Hath white and red in it ſuch wondrous power,
That it can pierce through th'eyes unto the heart,
And therein ſtir ſuch rage and reſtleſs ſtoure,[3]
As nought but death can ſtint his dolour's ſmart?
Or can proportion of the outward part,
Move ſuch affection in the inward mind,
That it can rob both ſenſe and reaſon blind?

Why do not then the bloſſoms of the field,
Which are array'd with much more orient hue,
And to the ſenſe moſt dainty odours yield,
Work like impreſſion in the looker's view?
Or why do not fair pictures like power ſhow,
In which ofttimes, we Nature ſee of Art
Excel'd, in perfect limning every part.

[3] *tempest.*

But ah, believe me, there is more than ſo
That works ſuch wonders in the minds of men.
I that have often prov'd, too well it know;
And who ſo liſt the like eſſays to ken,
Shall find by trial, and confeſs it then,
That Beauty is not, as fond men miſ-deem,
An outward ſhow of things, that only ſeem.

For that ſame goodly hue of white and red,
With which the cheeks are ſprinkled, ſhall decay,
And thoſe ſweet roſy leaves ſo fairly ſpread
Upon the lips, ſhall fade and fall away
To that they were, even to corrupted clay;
That golden wire, thoſe ſparkling ſtars ſo bright
Shall turn to duſt, and loſe their goodly light.

But that fair lamp, from whoſe celeſtial ray
That light proceeds, which kindleth lovers' fire,
Shall never be extinguiſht nor decay,
But when the vital ſpirits do expire,
Unto her native planet ſhall retire;
For it is heavenly born and cannot die,
Being a parcel of the pureſt ſky.

For when the ſoul, the which derivèd was
At firſt, out of that great immortal Sprite,
By Whom all live to love, whilom did paſs
Down from the top of pureſt heaven's height,
To be embodied here, it then took light
And lively ſpirits from that faireſt ſtar,
Which lights the world forth from his fiery car.

Which power retaining ſtill or more or leſs,
When ſhe in fleſhly ſeed is oft enraced,[4]
Through every part ſhe doth the ſame impreſs,
According as the heavens have her graced,
And frames her houſe, in which ſhe will be placed,

[4] *implanted.*

Fit for herſelf, adorning it with ſpoil
Of th' heavenly riches, which ſhe robb'd erewhile.

Thereof it comes, that theſe fair ſouls, which have
The moſt reſemblance of that heavenly light,
Frame to themſelves moſt beautiful and brave
Their fleſhly bower, moſt fit for their delight,
And the groſs matter by a ſovereign might
Tempers ſo trim, that it may well be ſeen,
A palace fit for ſuch a virgin Queen.

So every ſpirit, as it is moſt pure,
And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
So it the fairer body doth procure
To habit in, and it more fairly dight
With cheerful grace and amiable ſight;
For of the ſoul the body form doth take:
For ſoul is form, and doth the body make.

Therefore wherever that thou doſt behold
A comely corpſe, with beauty fair enduèd,
Know this for certain, that the ſame doth hold
A beauteous ſoul, with fair conditions thewèd,
Fit to receive the ſeed of virtue ſtrewèd:
For all that fair is, is by nature good;
That is a ſign to know the gentle blood.

Yet oft it falls, that many a gentle mind
Dwells in deformèd tabernacle drown'd,
Either by chance, againſt the courſe of kind,
Or through inaptneſs in the ſubſtance found,
Which it aſſumèd of ſome ſtubborn ground,
That will not yield unto her form's direction,
But is perform'd with ſome foul imperfection.

And oft it falls (ay me the more to me)
That goodly beauty, heaven's sweet image,
Is foul abus'd, and that celestial line,
Which doth the world with her delight adorn,
Made but the bait of sin, and shame's scorn;
Whilst everyone doth seek, and sue to have it,
But everyone doth seek but to deprave it.

Yet nathmore is that fair beauty's blame,
But theirs that do abuse it unto ill;
Nothing so good, but that through g[illegible]y shame
May be corrupt, and wrested unto will.
Nathless the soul is fair and beauteous still,
However flesh's fault it filthy make:
For things immortal no corruption take.

But ye fair dames, the world's dear ornaments,
And lively images of heaven's light,
Let not your beams with such disparagements
Be dimm'd, and your bright glory dark'ned quite,
But mindful still of your first country's sight,

Do ſtill preſerve your first informèd grace,
Whoſe ſhadow yet ſhines in your beauteous face.

Loath that foul blot, that helliſh firebrand,
Diſloyal luſt, fair Beauty's fouleſt blame,
That baſe affections, which your ears would bland,[5]
Commend to you by Love's abuſèd name,
But is indeed the bondſlave of defame;
Which will the garland of your glory mar,
And quench the light of your bright ſhining ſtar.

But gentle Love, that loyal is and true,
Will more illumine your reſplendent ray,
And add more brightneſs to your goodly hue,
From light of his pure fire, which by like way
Kindled of yours, your likeneſs doth diſplay;
Like as two mirrors by oppoſ'd reflection,
Do both expreſs the face's firſt impreſſion.

[5] *obscure.*

Therefore to make your beauty more appear,
It you behoves to love, and forth to lay
That heavenly riches, which in you ye bear,
That men the more admire their fountain may;
For elſe what booteth that celeſtial ray,
If it in darkneſs be enſhrinèd ever,
That it of loving eyes be viewèd never?

But in your choice of loves, this well adviſe,
That likeſt to yourſelves ye them ſelect,
The which your form's firſt ſource may ſympathize,
And with like beauties parts be inly deckt:
For if you looſely love without reſpect,
It is no love, but a diſcordant war,
Whoſe unlike parts amongſt themſelves do jar.

For love is a celeſtial harmony,
Of likely hearts compoſ'd of ſtars' conſent,
Which joins together in ſweet ſympathy,
To work each other's joy and true content,
Which they have harbour'd ſince their firſt deſcent

Out of their heavenly bowers, where they did ſee
And know each other here belov'd to be.

Then wrong it were that any other twain
Should in love's gentle band combinèd be,
But thoſe whom heaven did at firſt ordain,
And made out of one mould the more t' agree:
For all that like the beauty which they ſee,
Straight do not love: for love is not ſo light,
As ſtraight to burn at firſt beholder's ſight.

But they which love indeed, look otherwiſe,
With pure regard and ſpotleſs true intent,
Drawing out of the object of their eyes,
A more refinèd form, which they preſent
Unto their mind, void of all blemiſhment;
Which it reducing to her firſt perfection,
Beholdeth free from fleſh's frail infection.

And then conforming it unto the light,
Which in itſelf it hath remaining ſtill
Of that firſt ſun, yet ſparkling in his ſight,
Thereof he faſhions in his higher ſkill,
An heavenly beauty to his fancy's will;
And it embracing in his mind entire,
The mirror of his own thought doth admire.

Which ſeeing now ſo inly fair to be,
As outward it appeareth to the eye,
And with his ſpirit's proportion to agree,
He thereon fixeth all his fantaſy,
And fully ſetteth his felicity;
Counting it fairer than it is indeed,
And yet indeed her fairneſs doth exceed.

For lovers' eyes more ſharply ſighted be
Than other men's, and in dear Love's delight
See more than any other eyes can ſee,
Through mutual receipt of beamès bright,
Which carry privy meſſage to the ſprite,
And to their eyes that inmoſt fair diſplay,
As plain as light diſcovers dawning day.

Therein they ſee through amorous eye-glances,
Armies of loves ſtill flying to and fro,
Which dart at them their little fiery lances;
Whom having wounded, back again they go,
Carrying compaſſion to their lovely foe;
Who ſeeing her fair eyes' ſo ſharp effect,
Cures all their ſorrows with one ſweet aſpect.

In which how many wonders do they read
To their conceit, that others never ſee!
Now of her ſmiles, with which their ſouls they feed,
Like gods with nectar in their banquets free,
Now of her looks, which like to cordials be;
But when her words' embaſſade forth ſhe ſends,
Lord, how ſweet muſic that unto them lends!

Sometimes upon her forehead they behold
A thouſand Graces maſking in delight,
Sometimes within her eyelids they unfold
Ten thouſand ſweet belgards,[6] which to their ſight
Do ſeem like twinkling ſtars in froſty night:
But on her lips like roſy buds in May,
So many millions of chaſte pleaſures play.

All thoſe, O *Cytherea*, and thouſands more
Thy handmaids be, which do on thee attend
To deck thy beauty with their dainties' ſtore,
That may it more to mortal eyes commend,
And make it more admir'd of foe and friend;
That in men's hearts thou may'ſt thy throne inſtall,
And ſpread thy lovely kingdom over all.

[6] *kind looks.*

Then *Iö triumph*, O great Beauty's Queen!
Advance the banner of thy conqueſt high,
That all this world, the which thy vaſſals been,
May draw to thee, and with due fealty,
Adore the power of thy great Majeſty;
Singing this Hymn in honour of thy name,
Compil'd by me, which thy poor liege-man am.

In lieu whereof grant, O great Sovereign,
That ſhe whoſe conquering beauty doth captive
My trembling heart in her eternal chain,
One drop of grace at length will to me give;
That I her bounden thrall by her may live,
And this ſame life, which firſt from me ſhe reav'd,
May owe to her, of whom I it receiv'd.

And you, fair *Venus*, dearling, my dear dread,
Freſh flower of grace, great goddeſs of my life,
When your fair eyes theſe fearful lines ſhall read,
Deign to let fall one drop of due relief;
That may recure my heart's long-pining grief,
And ſhow what wondrous power your beauty hath,
That can reſtore a damnèd wight from death.

AN HYMN OF HEAVENLY LOVE.

Love, lift me up upon thy golden wings,
From this baſe world unto thy heaven's height,
Where I may ſee thoſe admirable things,
Which there thou workeſt by thy ſovereign might,
Far above feeble reach of earthly ſight;
That I thereof an heavenly Hymn may ſing
Unto the God of Love, high heaven's King.

Many lewd lays (ah, woe is me the more!)
In praiſe of that mad fit, which fools call love,
I have in th' heat of youth made heretofore,
That in light wits did looſe affection move.
But all thoſe follies now I do reprove,
And turnèd have the tenour of my ſtring,
The heavenly praiſes of true love to ſing.

And ye that wont with greedy vain deſire
To read my fault, and wond'ring at my flame,
To warm yourſelves at my wide-ſparkling fire,
Sith now that heat is quenchèd, quench my blame,
And in her aſhes ſhroud my dying ſhame:
For who my paſſèd follies now purſues,
Begins his own, and my old fault renews.

Before this world's great frame, in which all things
Are now contain'd, found any being place,
Ere flitting Time could wag his eyas'[1] wings
About that mighty bound, which doth embrace
The rolling ſpheres, and parts their hours by ſpace;
That high eternal Power, which now doth move
In all theſe things, mov'd in itſelf by love.

It lov'd itſelf, becauſe itſelf was fair;
(For fair is lov'd;) and of itſelf begot
Like to itſelf His Eldeſt Son and heir,
Eternal, pure, and void of ſinful blot;
The firſtling of his joy, in whom no jot
Of love's diſlike, or pride was to be found;
Whom He therefore with equal honour crown'd.

[1] *newly fledged.*

With Him he reign'd, before all time preſcribèd,
In endleſs glory and immortal might,
Together with that Third from them derivèd:
Moſt wiſe, moſt holy, moſt almighty Sprite,
Whoſe kingdom's throne no thought of earthly wight
Can comprehend, much leſs my trembling verſe
With equal words can hope it to rehearſe.

Yet O moſt bleſſed Spirit! pure lamp of light,
Eternal ſpring of grace and wiſdom true,
Vouchſafe to ſhed into my barren ſprite,
Some little drop of Thy celeſtial dew,
That may my rhymes with ſweet infuſe embrue,
And give me words equal unto my thought,
To tell the marvels by Thy mercy wrought.

Yet being pregnant ſtill with powerful grace,
And full of fruitful love, that loves to get
Things like Himſelf, and to enlarge His race,
His ſecond brood though not in power ſo great,
Yet full of beauty, next He did beget:
An infinite increaſe of angels bright,
All glift'ring glorious in their Maker's light.

To them the heaven's illimitable height:
Not this round heaven, which we from hence behold,
Adorn'd with thouſand lamps of burning light,
And with ten thouſand gems of ſhining gold;
He gave as their inheritance to hold,
That they might ſerve Him in eternal bliſs,
And be partakers of thoſe joys of His.

There they in their trinal triplicities
About Him wait, and on His will depend,
Either with nimble wings to cut the ſkies,
When He them on His meſſages doth ſend,
Or on His own dread preſence to attend;

Where they behold the glory of His light,
And carol Hymns of love both day and night.

Both day and night is unto them all one,
For He His beams doth ſtill to them extend,
That darkneſs there appeareth never none,
Ne hath their day, ne hath their bliſs an end,
But there their termleſs time in pleaſure ſpend,
Ne ever ſhould their happineſs decay,
Had not they dar'd their Lord to diſobey.

But pride impatient of long-reſting peace,
Did puff them up with greedy bold ambition,
That they 'gan caſt their ſtate how to increaſe,
Above the fortune of their firſt condition,
And ſit in God's own ſeat without commiſſion:
The brighteſt angel, even the Child of light
Drew millions more againſt their God to fight.

Th' Almighty ſeeing their ſo bold aſſay,
Kindled the flame of His conſuming ire,
And with His only breath them blew away
From heaven's height, to which they did aſpire,
To deepeſt hell, and lake of damnèd fire;
Where they in darkneſs and dread horror dwell,
Hating the happy light from which they fell.

So that next offspring of the Maker's love,
Next to Himſelf in glorious degree,
Degendering to hate, fell from above
Through pride; (for pride and love may ill agree)
And now of ſin to all enſample be:
How then can ſinful fleſh in ſelf aſſure,
Sith pureſt angels fell to be impure?

But that eternal fount of love and grace,
Still flowing forth His goodneſs unto all,
Now ſeeing left a waſte and empty place
In His wide Palace, through thoſe angels' fall,
Caſt to ſupply the ſame, and to inſtall

A new unknowen Colony therein,
Whoſe root from earth's baſe ground-work ſhould begin.

Therefore of clay, baſe, vile, and next to nought,
Yet form'd by wondrous ſkill, and by His might:
According to an heavenly pattern wrought,
Which He had faſhioned in His wiſe foreſight;
He man did make, and breathed a living ſprite
Into his face moſt beautiful and fair,
Endu'd with wiſdom's riches, heavenly, rare.

Such He him made, that he reſemble might
Himſelf, as mortal thing immortal could;
Him to be lord of every living wight,
He made by love out of His own like mould,
In whom He might His mighty ſelf behold:
For love doth love the thing belov'd to ſee,
That like itſelf in lovely ſhape may be.

But man forgetful of his Maker's grace,
No leſs than angels, whom He did endue,
Fell from the hope of promiſ'd heavenly place,
Into the mouth of death to ſinners due,
And all his offspring into thraldom threw:
Where they for ever ſhould in bonds remain,
Of never dead, yet ever dying pain,

Till that great Lord of Love, which him at firſt
Made of mere love, and after likèd well,
Seeing him lie like creature long accurſt,
In that deep horror of deſpairèd hell,
Him wretch in dole would let no longer dwell,
But caſt out of that bondage to redeem,
And pay the price, all were his debt extreme.

Out of the boſom of eternal bliſs,
In which He reignèd with His glorious fire,
He down deſcended, like a moſt demiſs[2]
And abject thrall, in fleſh's frail attire;
That He for him might pay ſin's deadly hire,

[2] *submissive.*

And him reſtore unto that happy ſtate,
In which he ſtood before his hapleſs fate.

In fleſh at firſt the guilt committed was,
Therefore in fleſh it muſt be ſatisfied:
Nor ſpirit, nor angel, though they man ſurpaſs,
Could make amends to God for man's miſguide,
But only man himſelf, who ſelf did ſlide.
So taking fleſh of ſacred virgin's womb,
For man's dear ſake He did a man become.

And that moſt bleſſèd body, which was born
Without all blemiſh or reproachful blame,
He freely gave to be both rent and torn
Of cruel hands; who with deſpiteful ſhame
Reviling Him, that them moſt vile became,
At length Him nailèd on a gallow tree,
And ſlew the juſt, by moſt unjuſt decree.

O! huge and moſt unſpeakable impreſſion
Of love's deep wound, that pierc'd the piteous heart
Of that dear Lord with ſo entire affection,
And ſharply launching[8] every inner part,
Dolours of death into His ſoul did dart;
Doing Him die, that never it deſerved,
To free His foes, that from His heſt had ſwerved.

What heart can feel leaſt touch of ſo ſore launch,
Or thought can think the depth of ſo dear wound?
Whoſe bleeding ſource their ſtreams yet never ſtaunch,
But ſtill do flow, and freſhly ſtill redound,
To heal the ſores of ſinful ſouls unſound,
And cleanſe the guilt of that infected crime,
Which was enrooted in all fleſhly ſlime.

O bleſſed well of love! O flower of grace!
O glorious Morning ſtar! O lamp of light,
Moſt lively image of Thy Father's face!
Eternal King of glory, Lord of might,
Meek lamb of God before all worlds behight,

[8] *lancing.*

How can we Thee requite for all this good?
Or what can price that Thy moſt precious blood?

Yet nought Thou aſk'ſt in lieu of all this love,
But love of us for guerdon of Thy pain.
Aye me; what can us leſs than that behove?
Had He requirèd life of us again,
Had it been wrong to aſk His own with gain?
He gave us life, He it reſtorèd loſt;
Then life were leaſt, that us ſo little coſt.

But He our life hath left unto us free,
Free that was thrall, and bleſſèd that was bann'd;
Ne aught demands, but that we loving be,
As He Himſelf hath lov'd us aforehand,
And bound thereto with an eternal band,
Him firſt to love, that us ſo dearly bought,
And next, our brethren to His image wrought.

Him firſt to love, great right and reaſon is,
Who firſt to us our life and being gave;
And after when we farèd had amiſs,
Us wretches from the ſecond death did ſave;
And laſt the food of life, which now we have,
Even Himſelf in His dear ſacrament,
To feed our hungry ſouls unto us lent.

Then next to love our brethren, that were made
Of that ſelf mould, and that ſelf-Maker's hand,
That we, and to the ſame again ſhall fade,
Where they ſhall have like heritage of land,
However here on higher ſteps we ſtand;
Which alſo were with ſelfſame price redeemed
That we, however of us light eſteemed.

And were they not, yet ſince that loving Lord
Commanded us to love them for His ſake,
Even for His ſake, and for His ſacred word,
Which in His laſt bequeſt He to us ſpake,
We ſhould them love, and with their needs partake;

Knowing that whatſoe'er to them we give,
We give to Him, by Whom we all do live.

Such mercy He by His moſt holy reede[4]
Unto us taught, and to approve it true,
Enſampled it by His moſt righteous deed,
Showing us mercy, miſerable crew,
That we the like ſhould to the wretches ſhow,
And love our brethren; thereby to approve,
How much Himſelf that lovèd us, we love.

Then rouſe thyſelf, O earth! out of thy ſoil,
In which thou walloweſt like to filthy ſwine,
And doſt thy mind in dirty pleaſures moil,
Unmindful of that deareſt Lord of thine;
Lift up to Him thy heavy-clouded eyne,
That thou His ſovereign bounty may'ſt behold,
And read through love His mercies manifold.

[4] *word.*

Begin from firſt, where He encradled was
In ſimple cratch,[5] wrapt in a wad[6] of hay,
Between the toilful ox and humble aſs,
And in what rags, and in how baſe array,
The glory of our heavenly riches lay,
When Him the ſilly Shepherds came to ſee,
Whom greateſt princes ſought on loweſt knee.

From thence read on the ſtory of His life,
His humble carriage, His unfaulty ways,
His cancred foes, His fights, His toil, His ſtrife,
His pains, His poverty, His ſharp aſſays,
Through which He paſt His miſerable days,
Offending none, and doing good to all,
Yet being malic'd both of great and ſmall.

And look at laſt how of moſt wretched wights,
He taken was, betray'd, and falſe accuſed;
How with moſt ſcornful taunts, and fell deſpites,
He was revil'd, diſgrac'd, and foul abuſed;
How ſcourg'd, how crown'd, how buffeted, how bruiſed;

[5] *cradle* (manger). [6] *bundle.*

And laſtly how 'twixt robbers crucified,
With bitter wounds through hands, through feet and ſide.

Then let thy flinty heart that feels no pain,
Empiercèd be with pitiful remorſe,
And let thy bowels bleed in every vein,
At ſight of His moſt ſacred heavenly corſe,
So torn and mangled with malicious force,
And let thy ſoul, whoſe ſins His ſorrows wrought,
Melt into tears, and groan in grievèd thought.

With ſenſe whereof whilſt ſo thy ſoftened ſpirit
Is inly touched, and humbled with meek zeal,
Through meditation of His endleſs merit,
Lift up thy mind to th' Author of thy weal,
And to His ſovereign mercy do appeal;
Learn Him to love, that lovèd thee ſo dear,
And in thy breaſt, His bleſſèd image bear.

With all thy heart, with all thy ſoul and mind,
Thou muſt Him love, and His beheſts embrace;
All other loves, with which the world doth blind
Weak fancies, and ſtir up affections baſe,
Thou muſt renounce, and utterly diſplace,
And give thyſelf unto Him full and free,
That full and freely gave Himſelf to thee.

Then ſhalt thou feel thy ſpirit ſo poſſeſt,
And raviſht with devouring great deſire
Of His dear ſelf, that ſhall thy feeble breaſt
Inflame with love, and ſet thee all on fire
With burning zeal, through every part entire,
That in no earthly thing thou ſhalt delight,
But in His ſweet and amiable ſight.

Thenceforth all world's deſire will in
thee die,
And all earth's glory on which men do
gaze,
Seem dirt and droſs in thy pure-ſighted
eye,
Compar'd to that celeſtial Beauty's blaze;
Whoſe glorious beams all fleſhly ſenſe
doth daze
With admiration of their paſſing light,
Blinding the eyes and 'lumining the
ſprite.

Then ſhall thy raviſht ſoul inſpirèd be
With heavenly thoughts, far above
human ſkill,
And thy bright radiant eyes ſhall plainly
ſee
The Idea of His pure glory preſent ſtill,
Before thy face, that all thy ſpirits ſhall
fill
With ſweet enragement of celeſtial love,
Kindled through ſight of thoſe fair things
above.

III. AMORETTI.

[*This series of love-sonnets, which take their place earlier beside those of Sidney and Shakespeare, in their self-revelation and charm of phrasing, and later link on to Mrs. Browning's (so-called) 'Sonnets from the Portuguese,' were first published in* 1595. *They may with certainty be assigned to the years of Spenser's finally successful courtship,* 1592-94. *Probably, however, he fell back on earlier written sonnets and wrought them into the 'Amoretti.' For myself, I cannot help thinking that Sonnets lxxxvi. to lxxxix. belong to 'Rosalinde,' and not to Elizabeth Boyle absolutely. (See note on Sonnet lxxxv.) It is difficult, if not impossible, to communicate one's impression on a thing of this sort, and we really have nothing of fact whereby to determine it beyond the Shepherd's Calendar, January (see back, p.* 8). *I will only name Sonnets iii., vii., ix., xii., xxvi., and xli. as of those that might have been primarily addressed to 'Rosalinde.' It was the 'neue poete's' wont to preserve and rework on his most fugitive and 'green' productions—in this*

reſembling a greater than he—John Milton. In Works (as before, vol. i., pp. 511-528) will be found a 'Critical Analyſis of the Amoretti,' with notes on the new light ſhed on it from the diſcloſure of the poet's wife's name. In the preſent volume only a very few things could well be annotated. The Epiſtle-dedicatory of the original publiſher—William Ponſonby—is prefixed.]—G.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL SIR ROBERT NEEDHAM, KNIGHT.

Sir,—To gratulate your ſafe return from Ireland, I had nothing ſo ready, nor thought anything ſo meet, as theſe ſweet conceited Sonnets, the deed of that well-deſerving gentleman, maſter Edmund Spenſer: *whoſe name ſufficiently warranting the worthineſs of the work: I do more confidently preſume to publiſh it in his abſence, under your name to whom (in my poor opinion) the patronage thereof doth in ſome reſpects properly appertain. For, beſides your judgment and delight in learned poeſie: This gentle Muſe for her former perfection long wiſhed for in England, now at the length croſſing the Seas in your happy*

company, (though to yourſelf unknown) ſeemeth to make choice of you, as meeteſt to give her deſerved countenance, after her return: entertain her, then, (Right worſhipful) in ſort beſt beſeeming your gentle mind, and her merit, and take in worth my good-will herein, who ſeek no more, but to ſhow myſelf yours in all dutiful affection.

W. P.[1]

SONNET I.

HAPPY ye leaves whenas thoſe lily hands,
which hold my life in their dead-doing might
ſhall handle you and hold in love's ſoft bands,
like captives trembling at the victor's ſight.
And happy lines, on which with ſtarry light,
thoſe lamping eyes will deign ſometimes to look
and read the ſorrows of my dying ſprite,
written with tears in heart's cloſe bleeding book:

[1] *William Ponsonby.*

And happy rhymes bath'd in the ſacred brook
of *Helicon* whence ſhe derivèd is,[2]
when ye behold that angel's bleſſèd look,
my ſoul's long lackèd food, my heaven's bliſs;
Leaves, lines, and rhymes, ſeek her to pleaſe alone,
whom if ye pleaſe, I care for other none.

SONNET II.

Unquiet thought, whom at the firſt I bred,
of th' inward bale of my love-pinèd heart:
and ſithens have with ſighs and ſorrows fed,
till greater than my womb thou woxen art;
Break forth at length out of the inner part,
in which thou lurkeſt like to viper's brood:
and ſeek ſome ſuccour both to eaſe my ſmart
and alſo to ſuſtain thyſelf with food.

[2] Is this odd-looking allusion to Helicon a hint at her name Elizabeth as=Helice in Sonnet xxxiv., *i.e.* Elisé?—G.

But if in preſence of that faireſt proud
thou chance to come, fall lowly at her feet:
and with meek humbleſſe and afflicted mood,
pardon for thee, and grace for me entreat:
Which if ſhe grant, then live and my love cheriſh,
if not, die ſoon, and I with thee will periſh.

SONNET III.

The ſovereign beauty which I do admire,
witneſs the world how worthy to be praiſèd:
the light whereof hath kindled heavenly fire,
in my frail ſpirit by her from baſeneſs raiſèd;
That being now with her huge brightneſs dazèd,
baſe thing I can no more endure to view:
but looking ſtill on her I ſtand amazèd,
at wondrous ſight of ſo celeſtial hue.

So when my tongue would ſpeak her
praiſes due,
it ſtoppèd is with thought's aſtoniſh-
ment:
and when my pen would write her
titles true,
it raviſht is with fancy's wonder-
ment:
Yet in my heart I then both ſpeak and
write,
the wonder that my wit cannot in-
dite.

SONNET IV.

New year forth-looking out of *Janus'*
gate,[3]
doth ſeem to promiſe hope of new
delight:
and bidding th' old Adieu, his paſſèd
date
bids all old thoughts to die in dumpiſh
ſprite.

[3] This opening line is important, as it dates the commencement of the wooing at close of the year (1592), and begins the new year with January, not March.—G.

And calling forth out of ſad Winter's night,
freſh love, that long hath ſlept in cheerleſs bower:
wills him awake, and ſoon about him dight
his wanton wings and darts of deadly power.
For luſty Spring now in his timely hour,
is ready to come forth him to receive:
and warns the earth, with divers colour'd flower,
to deck herſelf, and her fair mantle weave.
Then you fair flower, in whom freſh youth doth reign,
Prepare yourſelf new love to entertain.

SONNET V.

Rudely thou wrongeſt my dear heart's deſire,
in finding fault with her too portly pride:
the thing which I do moſt in her admire,
is of the world unworthy moſt envied.

For in thoſe lofty looks is cloſe implied,
ſcorn of baſe things, and ſdain of foul diſhonour:
threat'ning raſh eyes which gaze on her ſo wide,
that looſely they ne dare to look upon her.
Such pride is praiſe, ſuch portlineſs is honour,
that bold'ned innocence bears in her eyes:
and her fair countenance like a goodly banner,
ſpreads in defiance of all enemies.
Was never in this world aught worthy tried,[4]
without ſome ſpark of ſuch ſelf-pleaſing pride.

SONNET VI.

Be nought diſmayed that her unmovèd mind,
doth ſtill perſiſt in her rebellious pride:
ſuch love not like to luſts of baſer kind,
the harder won, the firmer will abide.

[4] *proved to be worthy.*

The dureful[5] oak, whoſe ſap is not yet dried,
is long ere it conceive the kindling fire:
but when it once doth burn, it doth divide
great heat, and makes his flames to heaven aſpire.
So hard it is to kindle new deſire,
in gentle breaſt that ſhall endure for ever:
deep is the wound, that dints the parts entire
with chaſte affects, that naught but death can ſever.
Then think not long in taking little pain
to knit the knot, that ever ſhall remain.

Sonnet VII.

Fair eyes, the mirror of my mazèd heart,
what wondrous virtue is contained in you
the which both life and death forth from you dart
into the object of your mighty view?

[5] *enduring.*

For, when ye mildly look with lovely hue,
then is my ſoul with life and love inſpired:
but when ye lour, or look on me aſkew
then do I die, as one with lightning fired.
But ſince that life is more than death deſired,
look ever lovely, as becomes you beſt,
that your bright beams of my weak eyes admired,
may kindle living fire within my breaſt.
Such life ſhould be the honour of your light,
ſuch death the ſad enſample of your might.

SONNET VIII.

More than moſt fair, full of the living fire
Kindled above unto the Maker near:
no eyes but joys, in which all powers conſpire,
that to the world naught elſe be counted dear.

Through your bright beams doth not the
blinded gueſt,
ſhoot out his darts to baſe affection's
wound?
but angels come to lead frail minds
to reſt
in chaſte deſires on heavenly beauty
bound.
You frame my thoughts and faſhion me
within,
you ſtop my tongue and teach my
heart to ſpeak,
you calm the ſtorm that paſſion did
begin,
ſtrong through your cauſe, but by
your virtue weak.
Dark is the world, where your light
ſhinèd never;
well is he born that may behold you
ever.

SONNET IX.

Longwhile I ſought to what I might
compare
thoſe powerful eyes, which lighten
my dark ſprite,
yet find I nought on earth to which
I dare
reſemble th'image of their goodly light.

Not to the Sun: for they do ſhine by night;
nor to the Moon: for they are changèd never;
nor to the Stars: for they have purer ſight;
nor to the Fire: for they conſume not ever;
Nor to the Lightning: for they ſtill perſever;
nor to the Diamond: for they are more tender;
nor unto Chryſtal: for nought may them ſever;
nor unto Glaſs: ſuch baſeneſs might offend her;
Then to the Maker ſelf they likeſt be,
whoſe light doth lighten all that here we ſee.

SONNET X.

Unrighteous lord of love what law is this,
that me thou makeſt thus tormented be:
the whiles ſhe lordeth in licentious bliſs
of her freewill, ſcorning both thee and me.

See how the Tyranneſs doth joy to ſee
the huge maſſacres which her eyes do make:
and humbled hearts brings captive unto thee,
that thou of them may'ſt mighty vengeance take.
But her proud heart do thou a little ſhake,
and that high look, with which ſhe doth control
all this world's pride, bow to a baſer make,
and all her faults in thy black book enrol;
That I may laugh at her in equal ſort,
as ſhe doth laugh at me, and makes my pain her ſport.

SONNET XI.

Daily when I do ſeek and ſue for peace,
and hoſtages do offer for my truth;
ſhe cruel warrior doth herſelf addreſs
to battle, and the weary war renew'th.

Ne will be mov'd with reaſons or with ruth,
to grant ſmall reſpite to my reſtleſs toil:
but greedily her fell intent purſueth,
of my poor life to make unpitied ſpoil.
Yet my poor life, all ſorrows to aſſoil,
I would her yield, her wrath to pacify:
but then ſhe ſeeks with torment and turmoil,
to force me live, and will not let me die.
All pain hath end and every war hath peace,
but mine no price nor prayer may ſurceaſe.

SONNET XII.

One day I ſought with her heart-thrilling eyes,
to make a truce and terms to entertain:
all fearleſs then of ſo falſe enemies,
which ſought me to entrap in treaſon's train.

So, as I then diſarmèd did remain,
a wicked ambuſh which lay hidden long
in the cloſe covert of her guileful eyen,
thence breaking forth did thick about me throng.
Too feeble I t' abide the brunt ſo ſtrong,
was forced to yield myſelf into their hands:
who me captiving ſtraight with rigorous wrong,
have ever ſince kept me in cruel bands.
So Lady now to you I do complain,
againſt your eyes that juſtice I may gain.

SONNET XIII.

In that proud port, which her ſo goodly graceth,
whiles her fair face ſhe rears up to the ſky:
and to the ground her eye-lids low embaſeth,
moſt goodly temperature ye may deſcry,[6]

[6] Cf. Shakespeare's 'best-tempered pieces.' —G.

Mild humbleſs mixed with awful majeſty:
for looking on the earth whence ſhe was born,
her mind remembreth her mortality,
what ſo is faireſt ſhall to earth return.
But that ſame lofty countenance ſeems to ſcorn
baſe thing, and think how ſhe to heaven may climb:
treading down earth as loathſome and forlorn,
that hinders heavenly thoughts with droſſy ſlime.
Yet lowly ſtill vouchſafe to look on me,
ſuch lowlineſs ſhall make you lofty be.

SONNET XIV.

Return again my forces late diſmayed,
unto the ſiege by you abandon'd quite:
great ſhame it is to leave like one afraid,
ſo fair a piece for one repulſe ſo light.

'Gainſt ſuch ſtrong caſtles needeth greater might
than thoſe ſmall forts which ye were wont belay:
ſuch haughty minds enur'd to hardy fight,
diſdain to yield unto the firſt aſſay.
Bring therefore all the forces that ye may,
and lay inceſſant battery to her heart;
plaints, prayers, vows, ruth, ſorrow, and diſmay:
thoſe engines can the proudeſt love convert.
And if thoſe fail fall down and die before her,
ſo dying live, and living do adore her.

Sonnet XV.

Ye tradeful Merchants that with weary toil,
do ſeek moſt precious things to make your gain,
and both the Indias of their treaſures ſpoil;
what needeth you to ſeek ſo far in vain?

For lo, my love doth in herſelf contain
all this world's riches that may far be found:
if Sapphires, lo, her eyes be Sapphires plain;
if Rubies, lo, her lips be Rubies found;
If Pearls, her teeth be Pearls both pure and round;
if Ivory, her forehead ivory ween;
if Gold, her locks are fineſt gold on ground;
if Silver, her fair hands are ſilver ſheen:
But that which faireſt is, but few behold,
her mind adorn'd with virtues manifold.

Sonnet XVI.

One day as I unwarily did gaze
on thoſe fair eyes, my love's immortal light:
the whiles my 'ſtoniſht heart ſtood in amaze,
through ſweet illuſion of her looks delight;

I mote perceive how in her glancing
ſight,
legions of loves with little wings did
fly:
darting their deadly arrows fiery
bright,
at every raſh beholder paſſing by.
One of thoſe archers cloſely I did
ſpy,
aiming his arrow at my very heart:
when ſuddenly with twinkle of her
eye,
the damſel broke his miſintended
dart.
Had ſhe not ſo done, ſure I had been
ſlain,
yet as it was, I hardly ſcaped with
pain.

SONNET XVII.

The glorious portrait of that angel's
face,
made to amaze weak men's confuſèd
ſkill,
and this world's worthleſs glory to
embaſe;
what pen, what pencil, can expreſs
her fill?

For though he colours could deviſe at will,
and eke his learnèd hand at pleaſure guide :
leſt trembling, it his workmanſhip ſhould ſpill,
yet many wondrous things there are beſide.
The ſweet eye-glances, that like arrows glide ;
the charming ſmiles, that rob ſenſe from the heart ;
the lovely pleaſance, and the lofty pride ;
cannot expreſſèd be by any art.
A greater craftſman's hand thereto doth need,
that can expreſs the life of things indeed.

SONNET XVIII.

The rolling wheel that runneth often round,
the hardeſt ſteel in tract of time doth tear :
and drizzling drops that often do redound,
the firmeſt flint doth in continuance wear.

Yet cannot I with many a dropping tear,
and long entreaty, ſoften her hard heart,
that ſhe will once vouchſafe my plaint to hear,
or look with pity on my painful ſmart.
But when I plead, ſhe bids me play my part,
and when I weep, ſhe ſays tears are but water;
and when I ſigh, ſhe ſays, I know the art;
and when I wail, ſhe turns herſelf to laughter.
So do I weep, and wail, and plead in vain,
while ſhe as ſteel and flint doth ſtill remain.

SONNET XIX.

The merry Cuckoo, meſſenger of Spring,[7]
his trumpet ſhrill hath thrice already ſounded;
that warns all lovers wait upon their king,
who now is coming forth with garland crownèd.

[7] Doubtless Michael Bruce fetched thence his 'O cuckoo, messenger of Spring.'—G.

With noiſe whereof the choir of Birds reſounded
their anthems ſweet deviſèd of love's praiſe,
that all the woods their echoes back rebounded,
as if they knew the meaning of their lays.
But 'mongſt them all which did Love's honour raiſe,
no word was heard of her that moſt it ought,
but ſhe his precept proudly diſobeys,
and doth his idle meſſage ſet at nought.
Therefore O Love, unleſs ſhe turn to thee
ere Cuckoo end, let her a rebel be!

SONNET XX.

In vain I ſeek and ſue to her for grace,
and do mine humbled heart before her pour:
the whiles her foot ſhe in my neck doth place,
and tread my life down in the lowly ſtoure.[8]

[8] *duſt.*

And yet the lion that is lord of power,
and reigneth over every beaſt in field:
in his moſt pride diſdaineth to devour
the ſilly lamb that to his might doth yield.
But ſhe more cruel and more ſavage wild,
than either lion or the lioneſs;
ſhames not to be with guiltleſs blood defiled,
but taketh glory in her cruelneſs.
Fairer than faireſt, let none ever ſay,
that ye were blooded in a yielded prey!

SONNET XXI.

Was it the work of Nature or of Art,
which temp'red ſo the feature of her face,
that pride and meekneſs mixt by equal part,
do both appear t' adorn her beauty's grace?
For with mild pleaſance, which doth pride diſplace,
ſhe to her love doth looker's eyes allure:
and with ſtern countenance back again doth chaſe
their looſer looks that ſtir up luſts impure;

With ſuch ſtrange terms her eyes ſhe doth enure,
that with one look ſhe doth my life diſmay ;
and with another doth it ſtraight recure :
her ſmile me draws, her frown me drives away.
Thus doth ſhe train and teach me with her looks ;
ſuch art of eyes I never read in books.

SONNET XXII.

This holy ſeaſon fit to faſt and pray,
men to devotion ought to be inclined :
therefore, I likewiſe on ſo holy day,
for my ſweet Saint ſome ſervice fit will find.
Her temple fair is built within my mind,
in which her glorious image placèd is ;
on which my thoughts do day and night attend
like ſacred prieſts that never think amiſs.

There I to her as th' author of my bliſs,
will build an altar to appeaſe her ire:
and on the ſame my heart will ſacrifice,
burning in flames of pure and chaſte deſire:
The which vouchſafe O goddeſs! to accept,
amongſt thy deareſt relics to be kept.

SONNET XXIII.

Penelope for her *Ulyſſes'* ſake,
deviſ'd a Web her wooers to deceive:
in which the work that ſhe all day did make
the ſame at night ſhe did again unreave.
Such ſubtle craft my damſel doth conceive,
th' importune ſuit of my deſire to ſhun:
for all that I in many days do weave,
in one ſhort hour I find by her undone.
So when I think to end that I begun,
I muſt begin and never bring to end:
for with one look ſhe ſpills that long I ſpun,
and with one word my whole year's work doth rend.

Such labour like the Spider's web I find,
whoſe fruitleſs work is broken with
leaſt wind.

SONNET XXIV.

When I behold that Beauty's wonder-
ment,
and rare perfection of each goodly
part,
of Nature's ſkill the only complement,
I honour and admire the Maker's art.
But when I feel the bitter baleful
ſmart,
which her fair eyes unwares do work
in me:
that death out of their ſhiny beams
do dart;
I think that I a new *Pandora* ſee;
Whom all the gods in council did agree,
into this ſinful world from heaven to
ſend;
that ſhe to wicked men a ſcourge
ſhould be,
for all their faults with which they
did offend.
But, ſince ye are my ſcourge I will
entreat,
that for my faults ye will me gently
beat.

SONNET XXV.

How long ſhall this like dying life endure,
and know no end of her own miſery:
but waſte and wear away in terms unſure,[9]
'twixt fear and hope depending doubtfully!
Yet better were at once to let me die,
and ſhow the laſt enſample of your pride;
than to torment me thus with cruelty,
to prove your power, which I too well have tried.
But yet if in your hard'ned breaſt ye hide,
a cloſe intent at laſt to ſhow me grace:
then all the woes and wrecks which I abide,
as means of bliſs I gladly will embrace;
And wiſh that more and greater they might be,
that greater meed at laſt may turn to me.

[9] Shakespeare's 'terms unsure,' and Coleridge's 'life in death,' tell us they had read this sonnet.—G.

SONNET XXVI.

Sweet is the Roſe, but grows upon a briar;
ſweet is the Juniper, but ſharp his bough;
ſweet is the Eglantine, but pricketh near;
ſweet is the Firbloom, but his branches rough;
Sweet is the Cypreſs, but his rind is tough;
ſweet is the Nut, but bitter is his pill;
ſweet is the Broom-flower, but yet ſour enough;
and ſweet is Moly, but his root is ill.
So every ſweet with ſour is tempered ſtill,
that maketh it be coveted the more:
for eaſy things that may be got at will,
moſt ſorts of men do ſet but little ſtore.
Why then ſhould I account of little pain,
that endleſs pleaſure ſhall unto me gain?

Sonnet XXVII.

Fair Proud! now tell me, why ſhould fair be proud,
Sith all world's glory is but droſs unclean,
and in the ſhade of death itſelf ſhall ſhroud,
however now thereof ye little ween!
That goodly idol, now ſo gay beſeen,
ſhall doff her fleſh's borrowed fair attire:
and be forgot as it had never been,
that many now much worſhip and admire!
Ne any then ſhall after it inquire,
ne any mention ſhall thereof remain;
but what this verſe, that never ſhall expire,
ſhall to you purchaſe, with her thankleſs pain.
Fair! be no longer proud of that ſhall periſh,
but that which ſhall you make immortal, periſh.

SONNET XXVIII.

The laurel leaf, which you this day do wear,
gives me great hope of your relenting mind:
for ſince it is the badge which I do bear,
ye bearing it do ſeem to me inclined:
The power thereof, which oft in me I find,
let it likewiſe your gentle breaſt inſpire
with ſweet infuſion, and put you in mind
of that proud maid, whom now thoſe leaves attire.
Proud *Daphne* ſcorning *Phœbus'* lovely fire,
on the Theſſalian ſhore from him did fly:
for which the gods in their revengeful ire
did her transform into a laurel tree.
Then fly no more, fair love, from *Phœbus'* chaſe,
But in your breaſt his leaf and love embrace.

SONNET XXIX.

See! how the ſtubborn damſel doth deprave
my ſimple meaning with diſdainful ſcorn:
and by the bay which I unto her gave,
accounts myſelf her captive quite forlorn.
The bay (quoth ſhe) is of the victors borne,
yielded them by the vanquiſhed as their meeds,
and they therewith do poets' heads adorn,
to ſing the glory of their famous deeds.
But ſith ſhe will the conqueſt challenge needs,
let her accept me as her faithful thrall;
that her great triumph which my ſkill exceeds,
I may in trump of fame blaze over all.
Then would I deck her head with glorious bays,
and fill the world with her victorious praiſe.

SONNET XXX.

My love is like to ice, and I to fire ;
how comes it then that this her cold
ſo great
is not diſſolved through my ſo hot
deſire,
but harder grows the more I her
entreat ?
Or how comes it that my exceeding
heat
is not delay'd by her heart-frozen
cold ;
but that I burn much more in boiling
ſweat,
and feel my flames augmented mani-
fold ?
What more miraculous thing may be
told
that fire which all things melt, ſhould
harden ice :
and ice which is congeal'd with ſenſe-
leſs cold,
ſhould kindle fire by wonderful de-
vice !
Such is the power of love in gentle
mind,
that it can alter all the courſe of kind.

SONNET XXXI.

Ah! why hath Nature to ſo hard a heart,
given ſo goodly gifts of beauty's grace?
whoſe pride depraves each other better part,
and all thoſe precious ornaments deface.
Sith to all other beaſts of bloody race,
a dreadful countenance ſhe given hath:
that with their terror all the reſt may chaſe,
and warn to ſhun the danger of their wrath.
But my proud one doth work the greater ſcathe,
through ſweet allurement of her lovely hue:
that ſhe the better may in bloody bath,
of ſuch poor thralls her cruel hands embrue.
But did ſhe know how ill theſe two accord,
ſuch cruelty ſhe would have ſoon abhorr'd.

SONNET XXXII.

The painful ſmith with force of fervent heat,
the hardeſt iron ſoon doth mollify;
that with his heavy ſledge he can it beat,
and faſhion to what he it liſt apply.
Yet cannot all theſe flames in which I fry,
her heart more hard than iron ſoft a whit:
ne all the plaints and prayers with which I
do beat on th' anvil of her ſtubborn wit:
But ſtill the more ſhe fervent ſees my fit:
the more ſhe freezeth in her wilful pride:
and harder grows the harder ſhe is ſmit,
with all the plaints which to her be applied.
What then remains but I to aſhes burn,
and ſhe to ſtones at length all frozen turn?

SONNET XXXIII.

Great wrong I do, I can it not deny,
to that moſt ſacred Empreſs, my dear dread,
not finiſhing her Queen of Faëry,
that mote enlarge her living praiſes dead:
But Lodwick,[10] this of grace to me aread:
do ye not think th' accompliſhment of it,
ſufficient work for one man's ſimple head,
all were it as the reſt, but rudely writ?
How then ſhould I without another wit,
think ever to endure ſo tedious toil,
ſince that this one is toſt with troublous fit,
of a proud love, that doth my ſpirit ſpoil.
Ceaſe then, till ſhe vouchſafe to grant me reſt,
or lend you me another living breaſt.

[10] *Lodowick Bryskett.* See Works (as before), vol. i., pp. 500-508, for Bryskett's 'Discourse of Civil Life,' and priceless account of conversations with Spenser.—G.

SONNET XXXIV.

Like as a ſhip, that through the Ocean wide,
by conduct of ſome ſtar doth make her way,
whenas a ſtorm hath dimm'd her truſty guide,
out of her courſe doth wander far aſtray.
So I whoſe ſtar, that wont with her bright ray,
me to direct, with clouds is overcaſt,
do wander now, in darkneſs and diſmay,
through hidden perils round about me plac'd.
Yet hope I well, that when this ſtorm is paſt,
my *Helice*[11] the lodeſtar of my life
will ſhine again, and look on me at laſt,
with lovely light to clear my cloudy grief.
Till then I wander careful, comfortleſs,
in ſecret ſorrow and ſad penſiveneſs.

[11] See p. 98, first note, on this name.—G.

SONNET XXXV.

My hungry eyes through greedy covetice,
ſtill to behold the object of their pain,
with no contentment can themſelves ſuffice,
but having pine,[12] and having not complain.
For lacking it they cannot life ſuſtain,
and having it they gaze on it the more:
in their amazement like *Narciſſus* vain
whoſe eyes him ſtarv'd: ſo plenty makes me poor.
Yet are mine eyes ſo fillèd with the ſtore
of that fair ſight, that nothing elſe they brook,
but loath the things which they did like before,
and can no more endure on them to look.
All this world's glory ſeemeth vain to me,
and all their ſhows but ſhadows, ſaving ſhe.

[12] *repine.*

Sonnet XXXVI.

Tell me, when ſhall theſe weary woes have end,
or ſhall their ruthleſs torment never ceaſe:
but all my days in pining languor ſpend,
without hope of aſſuagement or releaſe?
Is there no means for me to purchaſe peace,
or make agreement with her thrilling eyes:
but that their cruelty doth ſtill increaſe.
and daily more augment my miſeries?
But when ye have ſhowèd all extremities,
then think how little glory ye have gainèd:
by ſlaying him, whoſe life though ye deſpiſe,
mote have your life in honour long maintainèd.
But by his death, which ſome perhaps will moan,
ye ſhall condemnèd be of many a one.

Sonnet XXXVII.

What guile is this, that thoſe her golden treſſes.
ſhe doth attire under a net of gold:
and with ſly ſkill ſo cunningly them dreſſes,
that which is gold or hair, may ſcarce be told?
Is it that men's frail eyes, which gaze too bold,
ſhe may entangle in that golden ſnare:
and, being caught, may craftily enfold,
their weaker hearts, which are not well aware?
Take heed therefore, mine eyes, how ye do ſtare
henceforth too raſhly on that guileful net,
in which if ever ye entrappèd are,
out of her bonds ye by no means ſhall get.
Fondneſs it were for any being free,
to covet fetters, though they golden be.

SONNET XXXVIII.

Arion, when through tempeſt's cruel wrack,
he forth was thrown into the greedy ſeas;
through the ſweet muſic which his harp did make
allur'd a Dolphin him from death to eaſe.
But my rude muſic, which was wont to pleaſe
ſome dainty ears, cannot, with any ſkill,
the dreadful tempeſt of her wrath appeaſe,
nor move the Dolphin from her ſtub-born will,
But in her pride ſhe doth perſever ſtill,
all careleſs how my life for her deceaſe:
yet with one word ſhe can it ſave or ſpill:
to ſpill were pity, but to ſave were praiſe.
Chooſe rather to be praiſ'd for doing good,
than to be blam'd for ſpilling guiltleſs blood.

SONNET XXXIX.

Sweet ſmile! the daughter of the Queen of Love,
expreſſing all thy mother's powerful art:
with which ſhe wonts to temper angry *Jove*,
when all the gods he threats with thund'ring dart.
Sweet is thy virtue as thyſelf ſweetheart,
for when on me thou ſhineſt late in ſadneſs,
a melting pleaſance ran through every part,
and me revivèd with heart-robbing gladneſs.
Whilſt rapt with joy reſembling heavenly madneſs,
my ſoul was raviſht quite as in a trance:
and feeling thence no more her ſorrow's ſadneſs,
fed on the fulneſs of that cheerful glance,
More ſweet than nectar or ambroſial meat,
ſeem'd every bit, which thenceforth I did eat.

SONNET XL.

Mark when ſhe ſmiles with amiable cheer,
and tell me whereto can ye liken it:
when on each eyelid ſweetly do appear,
an hundred Graces as in ſhade to ſit.
Likeſt it ſeemeth in my ſimple wit
unto the fair ſunſhine in Summer's day,
that when a dreadful ſtorm away is flit,
through the broad world doth ſpread his goodly ray:
At ſight whereof each bird that ſits on ſpray,
and every beaſt that to his den was fled;
comes forth afreſh out of their late diſmay,
and to the light lift up their drooping head.
So my ſtorm-beaten heart likewiſe is cheered,
with that ſunſhine when cloudy looks are cleared.

SONNET XLI.

Is it her nature or is it her will,
to be ſo cruel to an humbled foe?
if nature, then ſhe may it mend with ſkill;
if will, then ſhe at will may will forego.
But if her nature and her will be ſo,
that ſhe will plague the man that loves her moſt,
and take delight t' increaſe a wretch's woe;
then all her nature's goodly gifts are loſt.
And that ſame glorious beauty's idle boaſt,
is but a bait ſuch wretches to beguile,
as being long in her love's tempeſt toſt,
ſhe means at laſt to make her piteous ſpoil.
O faireſt fair! let never it be namèd,
that ſo fair beauty was ſo foully ſhamèd.

SONNET XLII.

The love which me ſo cruelly tormenteth,
ſo pleaſing is in my extremeſt pain;
that, all the more my ſorrow it augmenteth,
the more I love and do embrace my bane.

Ne do I wiſh (for wiſhing were but vain)
to be acquit from my continual ſmart;
but joy her thrall for ever to remain,
and yield for pledge my poor captivèd heart;
The which that it from her may never ſtart,
let her, if pleaſe her, bind with adamant chain:[18]
and from all wand'ring loves which mote pervert,
his ſafe aſſurance, ſtrongly it reſtrain.
Only let her abſtain from cruelty,
and do me not before my time to die.

SONNET XLIII.

Shall I then ſilent be, or ſhall I ſpeak?
and if I ſpeak, her wrath renew I ſhall:
and if I ſilent be, my heart will break,
or chokèd be with overflowing gall.
What tyranny is this both my heart to thrall,
and eke my tongue with proud reſtraint to tie!
that neither I may ſpeak nor think at all,
but like a ſtupid ſtock in ſilence die.

[18] *i. e.*, of marriage. 'Love's linkèd ſweetneſs long drawn out.'—G.

Yet I my heart with ſilence ſecretly
will teach to ſpeak, and my just cauſe to plead:
and eke mine eyes with meek humility,
love-learnèd letters to her eyes to read.
Which her deep wit,[14] that true heart's thought can ſpell,
will ſoon conceive, and learn to conſtrue well.

SONNET XLIV.

When thoſe renownèd noble Peers of Greece,
through ſtubborn pride among themſelves did jar,
forgetful of the famous Golden Fleece;
then Orpheus with his harp their ſtrife did bar.
But this continual cruel civil war,
the which myſelf againſt myſelf do make:
whilſt my weak powers of paſſions wearied are,
no ſkill can ſtint nor reaſon can aſlake.

[14] Evidently Spenser had a profound sense of his lady-love's intellectual capacity co-equal with his admiration of her bewitching beauty 'of feature,' as with Petrarch's 'In alto intelleto un puro core' (='highest intellect with the purest heart.'—G.

But when in hand my tuneleſs harp I take,
then do I more augment my foes' deſpite:
and grief renew, and paſſions do awake,
to battle, freſh againſt myſelf to fight.
'Mongſt whom the more I ſeek to ſettle peace,
the more I find their malice to increaſe.

SONNET XLV.

Leave lady, in your glaſs of cryſtal clean,
your goodly ſelf for evermore to view;
and in myſelf, my inward ſelf, I mean,
moſt lively like behold your ſemblant true.
Within my heart, though hardly it can ſhow,
thing ſo divine to view of earthly eye:
the fair Idea of your celeſtial hue,
and every part remains immortally:

And were it not that, through your cruelty,
with ſorrow dimmed and deform'd it were:
the goodly image of your viſnomy,[15]
clearer than cryſtal would therein appear.
But if yourſelf in me ye plain will ſee,
remove the cauſe by which your fair beams darkened be.

SONNET XLVI.

When my abode's prefixèd time is ſpent,
My cruel fair ſtraight bids me wend my way:
but then from heaven moſt hideous ſtorms are ſent
as willing me againſt her will to ſtay.
Whom then ſhall I or heaven or her obey?
the heavens know beſt what is the beſt for me:
but as ſhe will, whoſe will my life doth ſway,
my lower heaven, ſo it perforce muſt be.

[15] *visage.*

But ye high heavens, that all this ſorrow ſee,
ſith all your tempeſts cannot hold me back;
aſſuage your ſtorms, or elſe both you, and ſhe,
will both together me too ſorely wrack.
Enough it is for one man to ſuſtain,
the ſtorms, which ſhe alone on me doth rain.

Sonnet XLVII.

Truſt not the treaſon of thoſe ſmiling looks,
until ye have their guileful trains well tried:
for they are like but unto golden hooks,
that from the fooliſh fiſh their baits do hide:
So ſhe with flatt'ring ſmiles weak hearts doth guide,
unto her love, and tempt to their decay;
whom being caught ſhe kills with cruel pride,
and feeds at pleaſure on the wretched prey:

Yet even whilſt her bloody hands them
ſlay,
her eyes look lovely, and upon them
ſmile:
that they take pleaſure in their cruel
play,
and dying do themſelves of pain
beguile.
O mighty charm which makes men love
their bane,
and think they die with pleaſure, live
with pain.

SONNET XLVIII.

Innocent paper whom too cruel hand,
did make the matter to avenge her
ire:
and ere ſhe could thy cauſe well
underſtand,
did ſacrifice unto the greedy fire.
Well worthy thou to have found better
hire,
than ſo bad end for heretics or-
dained:
yet hereſy nor treaſon didſt con-
ſpire,
but plead thy maſter's cauſe unjuſtly
pained.

Whom ſhe all careleſs of his grief conſtrained
to utter forth th' anguiſh of his heart:
and would not hear, when he to her complained,
the piteous paſſion of his dying ſmart.
Yet live for ever, though againſt her will,
and ſpeak her good, though ſhe requite it ill.

SONNET XLIX.

Fair cruel! why are ye ſo fierce and cruel,
is it becauſe your eyes have power to kill?
then know, that mercy is the Mighty's[16] jewel,
and greater glory think to ſave than ſpill.
But if it be your pleaſure and proud will,
to ſhow the power of your imperious eyes:
then not on him that never thought you ill,
but bend your force againſt your enemies.

[16] *Almighty.*

Let them feel th' utmoſt of your cruelties,
and kill, with looks as cockatrices do:
but him that at your footſtool humbled lies,
with merciful regard, give mercy to.
Such mercy ſhall you make admired to be,
ſo ſhall you live by giving life to me.

SONNET L.

Long languiſhing in double malady,
of my heart's wound and of my body's grief:
there came to me a leech[17] that would apply
fit medicines for my body's beſt relief.
Vain man (quod I) that haſt but little priefe
in deep diſcovery of the mind's diſeaſe;
is not the heart of all the body chief?
and rules the members as itſelf doth pleaſe.

[17] *doctor.*

Then with ſome cordials ſeek firſt to appeaſe,
the inward languor of my wounded heart,
and then my body ſhall have ſhortly eaſe;
but ſuch ſweet cordials paſs Phyſician's art.
Then my life's leech do you your ſkill reveal,
and with one ſalve both heart and body heal.

SONNET LI.

Do I not ſee that faireſt images
of hardeſt marble are of purpoſe made?
for that they ſhould endure through many ages,
ne let their famous monuments to fade.
Why then do I, untrain'd in lover's trade,
her hardneſs blame which I ſhould more commend?
ſith never ought was excellent aſſay'd,
which was not hard t' achieve and bring to end.

Ne aught ſo hard, but he that would attend,
mote ſoften it and to his will allure:
ſo do I hope her ſtubborn heart to bend,
and that it then more ſteadfaſt will endure.
Only my pains will be the more to get her;
but having her, my joy will be the greater.

Sonnet LII.

So oft as homeward I from her depart,
I go like one that having loſt the field,
is priſoner led away with heavy heart,
deſpoil'd of warlike arms and knowen ſhield.
So do I now myſelf a priſoner yield
to ſorrow and to ſolitary pain:
from preſence of my deareſt dear exiled,
long-while alone in languor to remain.

There let no thought of joy or pleaſure vain,
dare to approach, that may my ſolace breed:
but ſudden dumps and dreary ſad diſdain
of all world's gladneſs, more my torment feed.
So I her abſence will my penance make,
that of her preſence I my meed may take.

SONNET LIII.

The Panther, knowing that his ſpotted hide,
doth pleaſe all beaſts, but that his looks them fray:
within a buſh his dreadful head doth hide,
to let them gaze whilſt he on them may prey.
Right ſo my cruel Fair with me doth play,
for, with the goodly ſemblant of her hue,
ſhe doth allure me to mine own decay,
and then no mercy will unto me ſhew.

Great ſhame it is, thing ſo divine in view,
made for to be the world's moſt ornament:
to make the bait her gazers to embrue:
good ſhames to be too ill an inſtrument!
But mercy doth with beauty beſt agree,
as in their Maker ye them beſt may ſee.

SONNET LIV.

Of this world's Theatre in which we ſtay,
my Love, like the Spectator, idly ſits
beholding me that all the pageants play,
diſguiſing diverſely my troubled wits.
Sometimes I joy when glad occaſion fits,
and maſk in mirth like to a Comedy:
ſoon after when my joy to ſorrow flits,
I wail and make my woes a Tragedy.
Yet ſhe beholding me with conſtant eye,
delights not in my mirth nor rues my ſmart:
but when I laugh, ſhe mocks, and when I cry
ſhe laughs, and hardens evermore her heart.

What then can move her? if not mirth,
nor moan,
ſhe is no woman, but a ſenſeleſs ſtone.

Sonnet LV.

So oft as I her beauty do behold,
and therewith do her cruelty compare;
I marvel of what ſubſtance was the
mould
the which her made at once ſo cruel
fair.
Not earth; for her high thoughts
more heavenly are:
not water; for her love doth burn
like fire:
not air; for ſhe is not ſo light or rare:
not fire; for ſhe doth freeze with
faint deſire.
Then needs another element inquire
whereof ſhe mote be made; that is
the ſky:
for to the heaven her haughty looks
aſpire,
and eke her mind is pure immortal
high.
Then ſith to heaven ye likenèd are the
beſt,
be like in mercy as in all the reſt.

SONNET LVI.

Fair ye be ſure, but cruel and unkind,
as is a Tiger, that with greedineſs
hunts after blood, when he by chance doth find
a feeble beaſt, doth felly[18] him oppreſs.
Fair be ye ſure, but proud and pitileſs,
as is a ſtorm, that all things doth proſtrate:
finding a tree alone all comfortleſs,
beats on it ſtrongly, it to ruinate.
Fair be ye ſure, but hard and obſtinate,
as is a rock amidſt the raging floods:
gainſt which a ſhip of ſuccour deſolate,
doth ſuffer wreck both of herſelf and goods.
That ſhip, that tree, and that ſame beaſt am I,
whom ye do wreck, do ruin, and deſtroy.

[18] *fiercely.*

SONNET LVII.

Sweet warrior, when ſhall I have peace with you?
high time it is, this war now ended were:
which I no longer can endure to ſue,[19]
ne your inceſſant batt'ry more to bear:
So weak my power, ſo ſore my wounds appear,
that wonder is how I ſhould live a jot,
ſeeing my heart through-launchèd everywhere
with thouſand arrows, which your eyes have ſhot:
Yet ſhoot ye ſharply ſtill, and ſpare me not,
but glory think to make theſe cruel ſtoures.[20]
ye cruel one, what glory can be got,
in ſlaying him that would live gladly yours?
Make peace therefore, and grant me timely grace:
that all my wounds will heal in little ſpace.

[19] *fits.* [20] *purſue.*

Sonnet LVIII.

By her that is moſt aſſured to herſelf.

Weak is th' aſſurance that weak fleſh repoſeth
in her own power, and ſcorneth other's aid:
that ſooneſt falls whenas ſhe moſt ſuppoſeth,
herſelf aſſur'd, and is of nought afraid.
All fleſh is frail, and all her ſtrength unſtay'd
like a vain bubble blowen up with air:
devouring time and changeful chance have preyed,
her glory's pride that none may it repair.
Ne none ſo rich or wiſe, ſo ſtrong or fair,
but faileth, truſting on his own aſſurance:
and he that ſtandeth on the higheſt ſtair
falls loweſt: for on earth nought hath endurance.
Why then do ye, proud fair, miſdeem ſo far,
that to yourſelf ye moſt aſſurèd are?

SONNET LIX.

Thrice happy ſhe, that is ſo well aſſured
unto herſelf, and ſettled ſo in heart,
that neither will for better be allured,
ne fear'd with worſe to any chance to ſtart;
But like a ſteady ſhip doth ſtrongly part
the raging waves, and keeps her courſe aright:
ne ought from tempeſt doth from it depart,
ne ought for fairer weather's falſe delight.
Such ſelf-aſſurance need not fear the ſpite
of grudging foes, ne favour ſeek of friends:
but in the ſtay of her own ſteadfaſt might,
neither to one herſelf nor other bends.
Moſt happy ſhe that moſt aſſured doth reſt,
but he moſt happy who ſuch one loves beſt.

SONNET LX.

They, that in courſe of heavenly ſpheres are ſkilled,
to every planet 'point[21] his ſundry year:
in which her circle's voyage is fulfilled,
as Mars in three-ſcore years doth run his ſphere.
So, ſince the wingèd god his planet clear,
began in me to move, one year is ſpent:
the which doth longer unto me appear,
than all thoſe forty which my life outwent.
Then by that count, which lovers' books invent,
the ſphere of Cupid forty years contains:
which I have waſted in long languiſhment,
that ſeem'd the longer for my greater pains.
But let my Love's fair planet ſhort her ways
this year enſuing; or elſe ſhort my days.

[21] *appoint.*

SONNET LXI.

The glorious image of the Maker's beauty,
my ſovereign ſaint, the idol of my thought,
dare not henceforth above the bounds of duty
t' accuſe of pride, or raſhly blame for ought.
For being as ſhe is divinely wrought,
and of the brood of angels heavenly born;
and with the crew of bleſſed ſaints upbrought,
each of which did her with their gifts adorn;
The bud of joy, the bloſſom of the morn,
the beam of light, whom mortal eyes admire:
what reaſon is it then but ſhe ſhould ſcorn,
baſe things, that to her love too bold aſpire!
Such heavenly forms ought rather worſhipped be,
than dare be lov'd by men of mean degree.

SONNET LXII.

The weary year his race now having run,
the new begins his compact courſe anew:
with ſhow of morning mild he hath begun,
betokening peace and plenty to enſue;
So let us, which this change of weather view,
change eke our minds and former lives amend:
the old year's ſins forepaſt let us eſchew,
and fly the faults with which we did offend;
Then ſhall the New Year's joy forth freſhly ſend,
into the glooming world his gladſome ray;
and all theſe ſtorms which now his beauty blend,
ſhall turn to calms, and timely clear away.
So likewiſe Love, cheer you your heavy ſprite,
and change old year's annoy to new delight.

SONNET LXIII.

After long ſtorms and tempeſts' ſad aſſay,
which hardly I endurèd heretofore;
in dread of death and dangerous diſmay,
with which my ſilly bark was toſſèd ſore.
I do at length deſcry the happy ſhore,
in which I hope ere long for to arrive.
fair ſoil it ſeems from far, and fraught with ſtore
of all that dear and dainty is alive.
Moſt happy he that can at laſt achieve
the joyous ſafety of ſo ſweet a reſt:
whoſe leaſt delight ſufficeth to deprive
remembrance of all pains which him oppreſt.
All pains are nothing in reſpect of this,
all ſorrows ſhort that gain eternal bliſs.

SONNET LXIV.

Coming to kiſs her lips, (ſuch grace I found)
Meſeem'd I ſmelt a garden of ſweet flowers,
that dainty odours from them threw around
for damſels fit to deck their lovers' bowers.

Her lips did ſmell like unto Gillyflowers,
her ruddy cheeks, like unto Roſes red;
her ſnowy brows, like budded Bellamours,[22]
her lovely eyes, like Pinks but newly ſpread;
Her goodly boſom, like a Strawberry bed;
her neck, like to a bunch of Cullambines;[23]
her breaſt, like Lilies, ere their leaves be ſhed;
her nipples, like young bloſſomed Jaſmines:
Such fragrant flowers do give moſt odorous ſmell,
but her ſweet odour did them all excel.

Sonnet LXV.

The doubt which ye miſdeem, fair Love, is vain,
that fondly fear to loſe your liberty;
when loſing one, two liberties ye gain,
and make him bond that bondage erſt did fly.

[22] *lovers.* [23] *columbine* (a garden flower).

Sweet be the bands, the which true love doth tie,
without conſtraint or dread of any ill:
the gentle bird feels no captivity
within her cage, but ſings and feeds her fill.
There pride dare not approach, nor diſcord ſpill
the league 'twixt them, that loyal love hath bound:
but ſimple truth and mutual good-will,
ſeeks with ſweet peace to ſalve each other's wound.
There Faith doth fearleſs dwell in brazen tower,
and ſpotleſs Pleaſure builds her ſacred bower.

Sonnet LXVI.

To all thoſe happy bleſſings, which ye have,
with plenteous hand by heaven upon you thrown:
this one diſparagement they to you gave,
that ye your love lent to ſo mean a one.

Ye whoſe high worth's ſurpaſſing paragon,
could not on earth have found one fit for mate,
ne but in heaven matchable to none;
why did ye ſtoop unto ſo lowly ſtate?
But ye thereby much greater glory gate,
than had ye ſorted with a prince's peer:
for now your light doth more itſelf dilate,
and in my darkneſs greater doth appear.
Yet ſince your light hath once enlumin'd me,
with my reflex yours ſhall encreaſèd be.

SONNET LXVII.

Like as a huntſman after weary chaſe,
ſeeing the game from him eſcaped away:
ſits down to reſt him in ſome ſhady place,
with panting hounds beguilèd of their prey.
So after long purſuit and vain aſſay,
when I all weary had the chaſe forſook,
the gentle deer return'd the ſelf-ſame way,
thinking to quench her thirſt at the next brook.

There ſhe beholding me with milder look,
ſought not to fly, but fearleſs ſtill did bide:
till I in hand her yet half-trembling took,
and with her own good will her firmly tied.
Strange thing meſeem'd to ſee a beaſt ſo wild,
ſo goodly won, with her own will beguil'd.

SONNET LXVIII.

Moſt glorious Lord of life that on this day,
didſt make Thy triumph over death and ſin:
and having harrow'd hell didſt bring away,
captivity thence captive, us to win.
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin,
and grant that we for whom thou diddeſt die,
being with Thy dear blood clean waſhed from ſin,
may live for ever in felicity.

And that Thy love we weighing worthily,
may likewiſe love Thee for the ſame again:
and for Thy ſake that all like dear didſt buy,
with love may one another entertain.
So let us love, dear Love, like as we ought,
love is the leſſon which the Lord us taught.

Sonnet LXIX.

The famous warriors of the anticke world,
uſed trophies to erect in ſtately wiſe:
in which they would the records have enrolled,
of their great deeds and valorous empriſe.
What trophy then ſhall I moſt fit deviſe,
in which I may record the memory
of my Love's conqueſt, peerleſs Beauty's prize,
adorn'd with honour, love, and chaſtity!

Even this verſe vow'd to eternity,
ſhall be thereof immortal monument:
and tell her praiſe to all poſterity,
that may admire ſuch world's rare wonderment.
The happy purchaſe of my glorious ſpoil,
gotten at laſt with labour and long toil.

SONNET LXX.

Freſh Spring, the herald of love's mighty king,
in whoſe coat-armour richly are diſplayed,
all ſorts of flowers the which on earth do ſpring,
in goodly colours gloriously arrayed.
Go to my Love, where ſhe is careleſs laid,
yet in her Winter's bower not well awake:
tell her the joyous time will not be ſtaid
unleſs ſhe do him by the forelock take.
Bid her therefore herſelf ſoon ready make,
to wait on Love amongſt his lovely crew:
where everyone, that miſſeth then her make,
ſhall be by him amerced with penance due.

Make haſte therefore, ſweet Love, whilſt it is prime,
for none can call again the paſſèd time.

Sonnet LXXI.

I joy to ſee how in your drawen work,
yourſelf unto the Bee ye do compare;
and me unto the Spider that doth lurk,
in cloſe await to catch her unaware.
Right ſo yourſelf were caught in cunning ſnare
of a dear foe, and thrallèd to his love:
in whoſe ſtrait bands ye now captivèd are
ſo firmly, that ye never may remove.
But as your work is woven all above
with woodbine flowers and fragrant eglantine:
ſo ſweet your priſon you in time ſhall prove,
with many dear delights bedeckèd fine.
And all thenceforth eternal peace ſhall ſee
between the Spider and the gentle Bee.

SONNET LXXII.

Oft when my ſpirit doth ſpread her bolder wings,
in mind to mount up to the pureſt ſky:
it down is weigh'd with thought of earthly things
and clogg'd with burden of mortality;
Where when that ſovereign beauty it doth ſpy,
reſembling heaven's glory in her light:
drawn with ſweet pleaſure's bait, it back doth fly,
and unto heaven forgets her former flight.
There my frail fancy fed with full delight,
doth bath in bliſs and mantleth[24] moſt at eaſe:
ne thinks of other heaven, but how it might
her heart's deſire with moſt contentment pleaſe.
Heart need not wiſh none other happineſs,
but here on earth to have ſuch heaven's bliſs.

[24] Resteth as a bird with outspread wings, *e.g.*, lark, eagle.

SONNET LXXIII.

Being myſelf captivèd here in care,
my heart, (whom none with ſervile bands can tie,
but the fair treſſes of your golden hair,)
breaking his priſon, forth to you doth fly.
Like as a bird that in one's hand doth ſpy
deſirèd food, to it doth make his flight:
even ſo my heart, that wont on your fair eye
to feed his fill, flies back unto your ſight.
Do you him take, and in your boſom bright,
gently encage, that he may be your thrall:
perhaps he there may learn with rare delight,
to ſing your name and praiſes over all.
That it hereafter may you not repent,
him lodging in your boſom to have lent.

SONNET LXXIV.

Moſt happy letters, fram'd by ſkilful trade,
with which that happy name was firſt deſign'd,
the which three times thrice happy hath me made,
with gifts of body, fortune, and of mind.
The firſt my being to me gave by kind,
from mother's womb deriv'd by due deſcent;
the ſecond is my ſovereign Queen moſt kind,
that honour and large riches to me lent.
The third my Love,[25] my life's laſt ornament,
by whom my ſpirit out of duſt was raiſed:
to ſpeak her praiſe and glory excellent,
of all alive moſt worthy to be praiſed.
Ye three Elizabeths for ever live,
that three ſuch Graces did unto me give.

[25] Elizabeth Boyle, as before.

SONNET LXXV.

One day I wrote her name upon the ſtrand,[26]
but came the waves and waſhèd it away:
again I wrote it with a ſecond hand,
but came the tide, and made my pains his prey.
Vain man, ſaid ſhe, that doſt in vain aſſay,
a mortal thing ſo to immortalize;[27]
for I myſelf ſhall like[28] to this decay,
and eke my name be wipèd out likewiſe.
Not ſo, (quod I) let baſer things deviſe,
to die in duſt, but you ſhall live by fame:
my verſe your virtues rare ſhall eternize,
and in the heavens write your glorious name.
Where whenas death ſhall all the world ſubdue,
our love ſhall live, and later life renew.

[26] 'Kilcoran,' the gift bestowed by the 'Great Earl' on Elizabeth Boyle, overlooked 'the sea,' and its 'strand' (outside Youghall) is still renowned.

[27] Prettily and modestly said by her. Cf. Shakespeare:

'For who to frail mortality doth trust?'

[28] *liken.*

SONNET LXXVI.

Fair boſom, fraught with virtue's richeſt treaſure,
the neſt of love, the lodging of delight;
the bower of bliſs, the paradiſe of pleaſure;
the ſacred harbour of that heavenly ſprite:
How was I raviſht with your lovely ſight,
and my frail thoughts too raſhly led aſtray?
whiles diving deep through amorous inſight,
on the ſweet ſpoil of beauty they did prey!
And twixt her paps like early fruit in May,
whoſe harveſt ſeem'd to haſten now apace:
they looſely did their wanton wings diſplay,
and there to reſt themſelves did boldly place.
Sweet thoughts, I envy your ſo happy reſt,
which oft I wiſht, yet never was ſo bleſt.

SONNET LXXVII.

Was it a dream, or did I ſee it plain?
a goodly table of pure ivory:
all ſpread with junkets, fit to entertain,
the greateſt Prince with pompous royalty.
'Mongſt which, there in a ſilver diſh did lie,
two golden apples of unvalu'd price:
far paſſing thoſe which Hercules came by,
or thoſe which Atalanta did entice;
Exceeding ſweet, yet void of ſinful vice;
that many ſought, yet none could ever taſte;
ſweet fruit of pleaſure, brought from paradiſe
by Love himſelf, and in his garden plac'd.
Her breaſt that table was ſo richly ſpread,
my thoughts the gueſts, which would thereon have fed.

SONNET LXXVIII.

Lacking my Love, I go from place to place,
like a young fawn that late hath loſt the hind:
and ſeek each where, where laſt I ſaw her face,
whoſe image yet I carry freſh in mind.
I ſeek the fields, with her late footing fyn'd,[29]
I ſeek her bower with her late preſence deckt;
yet nor in field nor bower I can her find:
yet field and bower are full of her aſpect.
But when mine eyes I thereunto direct,
they idly back return to me again,
and when I hope to see their true object,
I find myſelf but fed with fancies vain.
Ceaſe then, mine eyes, to ſeek herſelf to ſee,
and let my thoughts behold herſelf in me.

[29] *refined.*

SONNET LXXIX.

Men call you fair, and you do credit it,
for that yourſelf ye daily ſuch do ſee:
but the true fair, that is the gentle wit,
and virtuous mind, is much more praiſ'd of me.
For all the reſt, however fair it be,
ſhall turn to nought and loſe that glorious hue:
but only that is permanent and free
from frail corruption, that doth fleſh enſue.[80]
That is true beauty: that doth argue you
to be divine, and born of heavenly ſeed:
deriv'd from that fair Spirit, from Whom all true
and perfect beauty did at firſt proceed.
He only fair, and what He fair hath made,
all other fair like flowers untimely fade.

[80] *purſue.*

Sonnet LXXX.

After ſo long a race as I have run
through Fairyland, which thoſe ſix books compile;
give leave to reſt me, being half fordone,
and gather to myſelf new breath awhile.
Then as a ſteed refreſhèd after toil,
out of my priſon I will break anew:
and ſtoutly will that ſecond work aſſoil,
with ſtrong endeavour and attention due.
Till then give leave to me in pleaſant mew,[81]
to ſport my Muſe, and ſing my Love's ſweet praiſe:
the contemplation of whoſe heavenly hue,
my ſpirit to an higher pitch will raiſe.
But let her praiſes yet be low and mean,
fit for the handmaid of the Fairy Queen.

[81] *retirement.*

Sonnet LXXXI.[32]

Fair is my Love, when her fair golden hairs,
with the looſe wind ye waving chance to mark:

[32] In 'Gongora,' by Edward Churton (2 vols., 1862), there is a sonnet resembling this, translated from Francesco de la Torre (= Quevedo). Probably both Spenser and Quevedo derived their original from some Italian poet (ii., p. 295). But as Quevedo lived later (b. 1580, d. 1645) he must somehow have seen Spenser's 'Amoretti.' It seems expedient here to quote the sonnet from above:

'Fair is my love, when to the Summer air
She doth her locks of tangled gold unbind;
Fair, when relating to my heart's despair,
She bids her stern eyes grant one glance more kind;
Fair, when, to still her troubled waves and wind,
She bids that light bark forth, which I adore;
Fair, when her gentlest grace of heavenly mind
Hath turn'd to joy the pining grief I bore;
Fair is her mildness; fair, though hard before;
Fair, cruel; fair, disdainful; fair, still fair.
E'en when my heaven seems gloom for evermore;
But her fair smile of beauty debonaire,

fair, when the roſe in her red cheeks appears,
or in her eyes the fire of love does ſpark.
Fair, when her breaſt like a rich-laden bark,
with precious merchandiſe ſhe forth doth lay:
fair, when that cloud of pride, which oft doth dark
her goodly light with ſmiles, ſhe drives away.
But faireſt ſhe, when ſo ſhe doth diſplay
the gate with pearls and rubies richly dight:
through which her words ſo wiſe do make their way
to bear the meſſage of her gentle ſprite:
The reſt be works of Nature's wonderment,
but this the work of heart's aſtoniſhment.

Can ne'er be known, till ſeen in its own light;
Nor ſeen, can word or thought report it right.'

SONNET LXXXII.

Joy of my life, full oft for loving you
I bleſs my lot, that was ſo lucky placed:
but then the more your own miſhap I rue,
that are ſo much by ſo mean love embaſed.
For had the equal heavens ſo much you graced
in this as in the reſt, ye mote invent
ſome heavenly wit, whoſe verſe could have enchaſed
your glorious name in golden monument.
But ſince ye deign'd ſo goodly to relent
to me your thrall, in whom is little worth,
that little that I am, ſhall all be ſpent,
in ſetting your immortal praiſes forth.
Whoſe lofty argument uplifting me,
ſhall lift you up unto an high degree.

SONNET LXXXIII.[83]

My hungry eyes, through greedy covetice,
ſtill to behold the object of their pain,
with no contentment can themſelves ſuffice,
but having pine, and having not complain;
For lacking it, they cannot life ſuſtain,
and ſeeing it, they gaze on it the more;
in their amazement like Narciſſus vain,
whoſe eyes him ſtarv'd: ſo plenty makes me poor.
Yet are mine eyes ſo fillèd with the ſtore
of that fair ſight, that nothing elſe they brook:
but loath the things which they did like before,
and can no more endure on them to look.
All this world's glory ſeemeth vain to me,
and all their ſhows but ſhadows, ſaving ſhe.

[83] Sonnet LXXXIII. is nearly a repetition of Sonnet XXXV.: but compare.

SONNET LXXXIV.

Let not one ſpark of filthy luſtful fire
break out, that may her ſacred peace moleſt:
ne one light glance of ſenſual deſire
attempt to work her gentle mind's unreſt.
But pure affections bred in ſpotleſs breaſt,
and modeſt thoughts breath'd from well-temp'red ſprites,
go viſit her in her chaſte bower of reſt,
accompanied with angelic delights.
There fill yourſelf with thoſe moſt joyous ſights,
the which myſelf could never yet attain:
but ſpeak no word to her of theſe ſad plights,
which her too conſtant ſtiffneſs doth conſtrain.
Only behold her rare perfection,
and bleſs your fortune's fair election.

SONNET LXXXV.

The world that cannot deem[84] of worthy things,
when I do praiſe her, ſay I do but flatter:
ſo does the Cuckoo, when the Mavis ſings,
begin his witleſs note apace to clatter.
But they that ſkill not of ſo heavenly matter,
all that they know not, envy or admire,
rather than envy, let them wonder at her,
but not to deem of her deſert aſpire.
Deep in the cloſet of my parts entire,
her worth is written with a golden quill,
that me with heavenly fury doth inſpire,
and my glad mouth with her ſweet praiſes fill.
Which whenas Fame in her ſhrill trump ſhall thunder,
let the world chooſe to envy or to wonder.[85]

[84] *judge.*

[85] As before stated, I think it is simply impossible to go beyond this 85th sonnet as addressed to his Elizabeth. The restfulness of

SONNET LXXXVI.

Venomous tongue, tipt with vile adder's ſting,
of that ſelf-kind with which the Furies fell
their ſnaky heads do comb, from which a ſpring
of poiſoned words and ſpiteful ſpeeches well:

---

success, even triumph, is fitly brought to a music-like ending when we take this sonnet for the last. 'Her worth is written,' &c., *is* a finale. Pity that ever the poet or his publisher gathered together the others that follow. They seem to me to bear on surface and in substance their own evidence of having been inspired by a different object, and under wholly different circumstances. Moreover, the 85 sonnets of the 'Amoretti' bring us well on into 1594, and thus leave no chronological room for a quarrel and estrangement so utter as Sonnet LXXXVI. would demand. I ask the reader, therefore, to stop short at Sonnet LXXXV. as his wooing of his wife: and to apply all thereafter to an earlier love-passion and agitation; in other words, to Rosalinde and Menalcas, or mayhap 'altera Rosalindula. See our 'Life of Spenser' in Works, as before.—G.

Let all the plagues and horrid pains, of hell,
upon thee fall for thine accurſèd hire:
that with falſe forgèd lies, which thou didſt tell,
in my true Love did ſtir up coals of ire;
The ſparks whereof let kindle thine own fire,
and, catching hold on thine own wicked head
conſume thee quite; that didſt with guile conſpire
in my ſweet peace ſuch breaches to have bred.
Shame be thy meed, and miſchief thy reward!
due to thyſelf, that it for me prepar'd.

Sonnet LXXXVII.

Since I did leave the preſence of my Love,
many long weary days I have out-worn:
and many nights, that ſlowly ſeem'd to move,
their ſad protract, from evening until morn.

For whenas day the heaven doth adorn,
I wiſh that night the noyous day would end:
and whenas night hath us of light forlorn,
I wiſh that day would ſhortly reaſcend.
Thus I the time with expectation ſpend,
and fain my grief with changes to beguile,
that further ſeems his term ſtill to extend,
and maketh every minute ſeem a mile.
So ſorrow ſtill doth ſeem too long to laſt,
but joyous hours do fly away too faſt.

SONNET LXXXVIII.

Since I have lackt the comfort of that light,
the which was wont to lead my thoughts aſtray:
I wander as in darkneſs of the night,
afraid of every danger's leaſt diſmay.
Ne ought I ſee, though in the cleareſt day,
when others gaze upon their ſhadows vain,
but th' only image of that heavenly ray,
whereof ſome glance doth in mine eye remain.

Of which beholding th' Idea plain,
through contemplation of my pureſt part:
with light thereof I do myſelf ſuſtain
and thereon feed my love-affamiſht heart.
But with ſuch brightneſs whilſt I fill my mind,
I ſtarve my body, and mine eyes do blind.

Sonnet LXXXIX.

Likeas the Culver[86] on the barèd bough
ſits mourning for the abſence of her mate;
and, in her ſongs ſends many a wiſhful vow,
for his return that ſeems to linger late:
So I alone now left diſconſolate,
mourn to myſelf the abſence of my love:
and, wand'ring here and there all deſolate,
ſeek with my plaints to match that mournful dove.

[86] *dove.*

Ne joy of ought that under heaven doth hove,
can comfort me, but her own joyous ſight:
whoſe ſweet aſpect both God and man can move,
in her unſpotted pleaſance to delight.
Dark is my day, whiles her fair light I miſs,
and dead my life that wants ſuch lively bliſs.

IV. EPITHALAMION.

[*The 'Epithalamion' accompanied the 'Amoretti.'* "*Hallam's forcible and ſympathetic notice may here ſpare me the taſk, arduous and unneceſſary, of attempting to praiſe a poem which, from* 1595 *onwards, has but rarely met with a rival in poetical fervour amongſt our lyrical odes—never amongſt our* Hymenæa: '*It is a ſtrain redolent of a bridegroom's joy, and of a poet's fancy. The Engliſh language ſeems to expand itſelf into a copiouſneſs unknown before, while he pours forth the varied*

imagery of this ſplendid little poem. I do not know any other nuptial ſong, ancient or modern, of equal beauty. It is an intoxication of ecſtasy, ardent, noble, and pure'" (*Profeſſor Palgrave, Works, as before, vol. iv., p. xciv*). *Profeſſor Palgrave adds:* "*Spenſer has here laid out his ſubject on his moſt congenial, most liberal ſcale; pouring forth all his exuberance, alluſive and deſcriptive, with a refined picturesqueneſs worthy of Shakeſpeare in his own age, of Keats or Tennyſon in ours;—the invention ſo copious, the form ſo beautiful, the melody ſo reſonant, as fairly to reſemble the* Allegro *with which Beethoven's orcheſtra is wont to cloſe a Symphony. He ſeems to write here from the whole fulneſs of his heart; and being hence led to include and dwell on every bridal aſſociation, old or new, which he could recall, the wealth of the 'Epithalamion' has perhaps tended a little to efface the impreſſion that depth of feeling is involved. But (even if it were not in itſelf a kind of treaſon to poetry to ſuppoſe this) the lovely ſimplicity of the* Envoy *may reaſſure us"* (*Ibid., pp. xciv-v*).

Profeſſor John Wilſon ('*Blackwood's Magazine,*' *vol. xxxiv., pp.* 824—854) *writes thus:*

"*No poet of our refined—our delicate age—could write his own marriage-hymn of thankſgiving. He could be more eaſily pardoned for his epitaph or his epicedia. But Spenſer lived in a ſtrong age. And had he been ſilent, he would have felt that he wronged Hymen as well as the Muſes*" (*p.* 849).]—G.

YE learnèd ſiſters which have oftentimes
been to me aiding, others to adorn,
Whom ye thought worthy of your
graceful rhymes,
That even the greateſt did not greatly
ſcorn
To hear their names ſung in your ſimple
lays,
But joyèd in their praiſe:
And when ye liſt your own miſhaps to
mourn,
Which death, or love, or fortune's wreck
did raiſe,
Your ſtring could ſoon to ſadder tenour
turn,
And teach the woods and waters to
lament
Your doleful dreriment:

Now lay thoſe ſorrowful complaints aſide,
And, having all your heads with garlands crown'd,
Help me mine own Love's praiſes to reſound;
Ne let the fame of any be envied;
So Orpheus did for his own bride!
So I unto myſelf alone will ſing;
The woods ſhall to me anſwer and my Echo ring.

Early, before the world's light-giving lamp,
His golden beam upon the hills doth ſpread,
Having diſperſt the night's uncheerful damp,
Do ye awake, and with freſh luſty-head,
Go to the bower of my belovèd Love,
My trueſt turtle-dove;
Bid her awake; for Hymen is awake,
And long ſince ready forth his maſk to move,
With his bright tead[1] that flames with many a flake,

[1] *torch.*

And many a bachelor to wait on him,
In their freſh garments trim.
Bid her awake, therefore, and ſoon her dight,
For lo! the wiſhèd day is come at laſt,
That ſhall, for all the pains and ſorrows paſt,
Pay to her uſury of long delight:
And whilſt ſhe doth her dight,
Do ye to her of joy and ſolace ſing,
That all the woods may anſwer, and your echo ring.

Bring with you all the Nymphs that you can hear,
Both of the rivers and the foreſts green:
And of the ſea that neighbours to her near,[2]
All with gay garlands goodly well beſeen.
And let them alſo with them bring in hand,
Another gay garland
For my fair Love, of lilies and of roſes,
Bound true-love wiſe with a blue ſilk riband.
And let them make great ſtore of bridal poſies,

[2] At Youghall, as before.

And let them eke bring ſtore of other flowers
To deck the bridal bowers.
And let the ground whereas[8] her foot ſhall tread,
For fear the ſtones her tender foot ſhould wrong,
Be ſtrewèd with fragrant flowers all along,
And diap'red like the diſcolourèd mead.
Which done, do at her chamber-door await,
For ſhe will waken ſtrait;
The whiles do ye this ſong unto her ſing,
The woods ſhall to you anſwer, and your echo ring.

Ye Nymphs of Mulla, which with careful heed,
The ſilver ſcaly trouts do tend full well,
And greedy pikes which uſe therein to feed:
(Thoſe trouts and pikes all others do excel)
And ye likewiſe, which keep the ruſhy lake,
Where none do fiſhes take;

[8] *whereon.*

Bind up the locks the which hang ſcatter'd light,
And in his waters, which your mirror make,
Behold your faces as the chryſtal bright;
That when you come whereas my Love doth lie,
No blemiſh ſhe may ſpy.
And eke, ye lightfoot maids, which keep the deer,
That on the hoary mountain uſe to tower,
And the wild wolves, which ſeek them to devour,
With your ſteel darts do chaſe from coming near;
Be alſo preſent here,
To help to deck her, and to help to ſing,
That all the woods may anſwer, and your echo ring.

Wake now, my Love, awake; for it is time;
The roſy Morn long ſince left Tithon's bed,
All ready to her ſilver coach to climb,
And Phœbus 'gins to ſhow his glorious head.

Hark how the cheerful birds do chant their lays
And carol of Love's praiſe.
The merry Lark her matins ſings aloft,
The Thruſh replies, the Mavis deſcant plays,
The Ouzell ſhrills, the Ruddock[4] warbles ſoft:
So goodly all agree with ſweet conſent,
To this day's merriment. [long,
Ah my dear Love, why do ye ſleep thus
When meeter were that ye ſhould now awake,
T' await the coming of your joyous make,[5] [ſong,
And hearken to the birds' love-learnèd
The dewy leaves among!
For they of joy and pleaſance to you ſing,
That all the woods them anſwer, and their echo ring.

My Love is now awake out of her dreams,
And her fair eyes, like ſtars that dimmèd were
With darkſome cloud, now ſhow their goodly beams
More bright than Heſperus his head doth rear.

[4] *robin redbreast.* [5] *mate.*

Come now ye damſels, daughters of delight,
Help quickly her to dight;
But firſt come ye fair Hours which were begot
In Jove's ſweet paradiſe, of Day and Night;
Which do the ſeaſons of the year allot,
And all that ever in this world is fair,
Do make and ſtill repair.
And ye three Handmaids of the Cyprian Queen,
The which do ſtill adorn her beauty's pride,
Help to adorn my beautifulleſt bride,
And as ye her array, ſtill throw between
Some graces to be ſeen;
And, as ye uſe to Venus, to her ſing,
The whiles the woods ſhall anſwer, and your echo ring.

Now is my Love all ready forth to come;
Let all the virgins therefore well await,
And ye freſh boys that tend upon her groom
Prepare yourſelves; for he is coming ſtrait.

Set all your things in ſeemly good array
Fit for ſo joyful day:
The joyfulſt day that ever ſun did ſee.
Fair Sun! ſhow forth thy favourable ray,
And let thy life-full heat not fervent be
For fear of burning her ſunſhiny face,
Her beauty to diſgrace.
O faireſt Phœbus! father of the Muſe!
If ever I did honour thee aright,
Or ſing the thing, that mote thy mind delight,
Do not thy ſervant's ſimple boon refuſe,
But let this day, let this one day be mine;
Let all the reſt be thine.
Then I thy ſovereign praiſes loud will ſing,
That all the woods ſhall anſwer, and their echo ring.

Hark! how the Minſtrels 'gin to ſhrill aloud,
Their merry Muſic that reſounds from far,
The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling crowd,
That well agree withouten breach or jar.

But moſt of all the Damſels do delight,
When they their timbrels ſmite,
And thereunto do dance and carol ſweet,
That all the ſenſes they do raviſh quite;
The whiles the boys run up and down
the ſtreet,
Crying aloud with ſtrong confuſèd noiſe,
As if it were one voice.
Hymen iö Hymen, Hymen, they do
ſhout;
That even to the heavens their ſhouting
ſhrill
Doth reach, and all the firmament doth
fill;
To which the people ſtanding all about,
As in approvance, do thereto applaud
And loud advance her laud;
And evermore they Hymen, Hymen ſing,
That all the woods them anſwer and
their echo ring.

Lo! where ſhe comes along with portly
pace,
Like Phœbe from her chamber of the
Eaſt,
Ariſing forth to run her mighty race,
Clad all in white, that 'ſeems[6] a virgin
beſt.

[6] *beseems, becomes.*

So well it her beſeems, that ye would ween
Some angel ſhe had been.
Her long looſe yellow locks like golden wire,
Sprinkled with pearl, and pearling flowers atween,
Do like a golden mantle her attire,
And, being crownèd with a garland green,
Seem like ſome maiden Queen.
Her modeſt eyes abaſhèd to behold
So many gazers, as on her do ſtare,
Upon the lowly ground affixèd are;
Ne dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But bluſh to hear her praiſes ſung ſo loud,
So far from being proud.
Nathleſs do ye ſtill loud her praiſes ſing,
That all the woods may anſwer, and your echo ring.

Tell me ye merchants' daughters,[7] did ye ſee
So fair a creature in your town before;
So ſweet, ſo lovely, and ſo mild as ſhe,
Adorn'd with Beauty's grace and Virtue's ſtore?

[7] Of Cork.

Her goodly eyes like Sapphires ſhining bright;
Her forehead ivory white;
Her cheeks like apples which the ſun hath rudded;
Her lips like cherries charming men to bite;
Her breaſt like to a bowl of cream uncrudded;
Her paps like lilies budded;
Her ſnowy neck like to a marble tower;
And all her body like a palace fair,
Aſcending up, with many a ſtately ſtair,
To Honour's ſeat and Chaſtity's ſweet bower.
Why ſtand ye ſtill ye virgins in amaze,
Upon her ſo to gaze,
While ye forget your former lay to ſing,
To which the woods did anſwer and your echo ring?

But if ye ſaw that which no eyes can ſee,
The inward beauty of her lively ſprite,
Garniſht with heavenly gifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that ſight,

And ſtand aſtoniſht like to thoſe which read
Meduſa's mazeful head.
There dwells ſweet Love and conſtant Chaſtity,
Unſpotted Faith and comely Womanhood,
Regard of honour and mild Modeſty;
There Virtue reigns as Queen in royal throne,
And giveth laws alone;
The which the baſe affections do obey,
And yield their ſervices unto her will,
Ne thought of things uncomely ever may
Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.
Had ye once ſeen theſe her celeſtial treaſures,
And unrevealèd pleaſures;
Then would ye wonder and her praiſes ſing,
That all the woods ſhould anſwer, and your echo ring.

Open the temple-gates unto my Love,
Open them wide that ſhe may enter in,
And all the poſts adorn as doth behove,
And all the pillars deck with garlands trim,

For to receive this Saint with honour due,
That cometh in to you.
With trembling ſteps and humble reverence,
She cometh in, before th' Almighty's view:
Of her ye virgins learn obedience,
When ſo ye come into thoſe holy places,
To humble your proud faces;
Bring her up to th' high altar, that ſhe may,
The ſacred ceremonies there partake,
The which do endleſs matrimony make;
And let the roaring Organs loudly play
The praiſes of the Lord in lively notes;
The whiles with hollow throats,
The Choriſters the joyous Anthem ſing,
That all the woods may anſwer, and their echo ring.

Behold whiles ſhe before the altar ſtands
Hearing the holy prieſt that to her ſpeaks
And bleſſeth her with his two happy hands,
How the red roſes fluſh up in her cheeks,

And the pure ſnow, with goodly vermeil ſtain,
Like crimſon dyed in grain;
That even th' angels which continually,
About the ſacred Altar do remain,
Forget their ſervice and about her fly,
Oft peeping in her face, that ſeems more fair,
The more they on it ſtare.
But her ſad eyes, ſtill faſtened on the ground,
Are governèd with goodly modeſty,
That ſuffers not one look to glance awry,
Which may let in a little thought unſound.
Why bluſh ye, Love, to give to me your hand,
The pledge of all our band!
Sing ye ſweet Angels, Alleluia ſing,
That all the woods may anſwer and your echo ring.

Now all is done: bring home the bride again,
Bring home the triumph of our victory;
Bring home with you the glory of her gain,
With joyance bring her and with jollity.

Never had man more joyful day than this,
Whom heaven would heap with bliſs.
Make feaſt therefore now all this live-long day:
This day for ever to me holy is.
Pour out the wine without reſtraint or ſtay,
Pour not by cups, but by the belly-full,
Pour out to all that wull,[8]
And ſprinkle all the poſts and walls with wine,
That they may ſweat, and drunken be withal.
Crown ye god Bacchus with a coronal,
And Hymen alſo crown with wreaths of vine,
And let the Graces dance unto the reſt;
For they can do it beſt:
The whiles the maidens do their carol ſing,
To which the woods ſhall anſwer and their echo ring.

Ring ye the bells, ye young men of the town,
And leave your wonted labours for this day:
This day is holy; do ye write it down,
That ye for ever it remember may.

[8] *will.*

This day the ſun is in his chiefeſt height,
With Barnaby[9] the bright,
From whence declining daily by degrees,
He ſomewhat loſeth of his heat and light,
When once the Crab behind his back he ſees.
But for this time it ill ordainèd was,
To chooſe the longeſt day in all the year,
And ſhorteſt night, when longeſt fitter were:
Yet never day ſo long, but late would paſs.
Ring ye the bells, to make it wear away,
And bonfires make all day,
And dance about them, and about them ſing:
That all the woods may anſwer, and your echo ring.

Ah! when will this long weary day have end,
And lend me leave to come unto my Love?
How ſlowly do the hours their numbers ſpend?
How ſlowly does ſad Time his feathers move?

[9] *St. Barnabas.*

Haſte thee, O faireſt Planet, to thy home
Within the Weſtern foam:
Thy tirèd ſteeds long ſince have need of reſt.
Long though it be, at laſt I ſee it gloom,
And the bright evening-ſtar with golden creſt
Appear out of the Eaſt.
Fair child of beauty, glorious lamp of Love
That all the hoſt of heaven in ranks doſt lead,
And guideſt lovers through the night's ſad dread,
How cheerfully thou lookeſt from above,
And ſeemſt to laugh atween thy twinkling light
As joying in the ſight
Of theſe glad many, which for joy do ſing,
That all the woods them anſwer and their echo ring!

Now ceaſe ye damſels your delights forepaſt;
Enough is it, that all the day was yours:
Now day is done, and night is nighing faſt:
Now bring the Bride into the bridal bowers.

The night is come, now ſoon her diſ-
array,
And in her bed her lay;
Lay her in lilies and in violets,
And ſilken curtains over her diſplay:
And odour'd ſheets, and Arras coverlets,
Behold how goodly my fair Love does lie
In proud humility!
Like unto Maia, when as Jove her took,
In Tempe, lying on the flow'ry grass,
Twixt ſleep and wake, after ſhe weary
was,
With bathing in the Acidalian brook.
Now it is night, ye damſels may be
gone,
And leave my Love alone,
And leave likewiſe your former lay to
ſing:
The woods no more ſhall anſwer, nor
your echo ring.

Now welcome night, thou night ſo long
expected,
That long day's labour doſt at laſt defray,
And all my cares, which cruel Love
collected,
Haſt ſumm'd in one, and cancellèd for
aye:

Spread thy broad wing over my Love and me,
That no man may us ſee,
And in thy ſable mantle us enwrap,
From fear of peril and foul horror free.
Let no falſe treaſon ſeek us to entrap,
Nor any dread diſquiet once annoy
The ſafety of our joy:
But let the night be calm and quietſome,
Without tempeſtuous ſtorms or ſad affray:
Likeas when Jove with fair Alcmena lay,
When he begot the great Tirynthian groom:
Or likeas when he with thyſelf did lie,
And begot Majeſty.
And let the maids and young men ceaſe to ſing:
Ne let the woods them anſwer, nor their echo ring.

Let no lamenting cries, nor doleful tears,
Be heard all night within, nor yet without:
Ne let falſe whiſpers breeding hidden fears,
Break gentle ſleep with miſconceivèd doubt.

Let no deluding dreams, nor dreadful ſights,
Make ſudden ſad affrights;
Ne let houſefires, nor lightnings helpleſs harms,
Ne let the Pouke,[10] nor other evil ſprites,
Ne let miſchievous witches with their charms,
Ne let hob-goblins, names whoſe ſenſe we ſee not,
Fray us with things that be not.
Let not the ſcreech Owl, nor the Stork be heard:
Nor the night-Raven that ſtill deadly yells,
Nor damnèd ghoſts call'd up with mighty ſpells,
Nor griſly vultures, make us once affeard:
Ne let th' unpleaſant Quire of Frogs ſtill croaking
Make us to wiſh their choking.
Let none of theſe their dreary accents ſing;
Ne let the woods them anſwer, nor their echo ring.

[10] *Puck.*

But let ſtill Silence true night-watches keep,
That ſacred peace may in aſſurance reign,
And timely ſleep, when it is time to ſleep,
May pour his limbs forth on your pleaſant plain;
The whiles an hundred little wingèd Loves,
Like divers-feathered doves,
Shall fly and flutter round about your bed,
And in the ſecret dark, that none reproves
Their pretty ſtealths ſhall work, and ſnares ſhall ſpread
To filch away ſweet ſnatches of delight,
Conceal'd through covert night.
Ye ſons of Venus, play your ſports at will,
For greedy pleaſure, careleſs of your toys,
Thinks more upon her paradiſe of joys,
Than what ye do, albeit good or ill.
All night therefore attend your merry play,
For it will ſoon be day:
Now none doth hinder you, that ſay or ſing,
Ne will the woods now anſwer, nor your echo ring.

Who is the ſame, which at my window peeps?
Or whoſe is that fair face, that ſhines ſo bright,
Is it not Cynthia, ſhe that never ſleeps,
But walks about high heaven all the night?
O, faireſt goddeſs, do thou not envy
My Love with me to ſpy:
For thou likewiſe didſt love, though now unthought,
And for a fleece of wool, which privily
The Latmian ſhepherd once unto thee brought,
His pleaſures with thee wrought.
Therefore to us be favourable now;
And ſith of women's labours thou haſt charge,
And generation goodly doſt enlarge,
Incline thy will t' effect our wiſhful vow,
And the chaſte womb inform with timely ſeed,
That may our comfort breed:
Till which we ceaſe our hopeful hap to ſing,
Ne let the woods us anſwer, nor our echo ring.

And thou, great Juno, which with awful
might
The laws of wedlock ſtill doth patronize,
And the religion of the faith firſt plight
With ſacred rites haſt taught to ſolem-
nize:
And eke for comfort often callèd art
Of women in their ſmart;
Eternally bind thou this lovely band,
And all thy bleſſings unto us impart.
And thou glad Genius, in whoſe gentle
hand,
The bridal bower and genial bed re-
main,
Without blemiſh or ſtain,
And the ſweet pleaſures of their loves'
delight
With ſecret aid doſt ſuccour and ſupply,
Till they bring forth the fruitful pro-
geny;
Send us the timely fruit of this ſame
night.
And thou, fair Hebe, and thou Hymen
free,
Grant that it may ſo be.
Till which we ceaſe your further praiſe
to ſing,
Ne any woods ſhall anſwer, nor your
echo ring.

And ye high heavens, the temple of the gods,
In which a thouſand torches flaming bright
Do burn, that to us wretched earthly clods:
In dreadful darkneſs lend deſirèd light;
And all ye powers which in the ſame remain,
More than we men can fain;
Pour out your bleſſing on us plenteouſly,
And happy influence upon us rain,
That we may raiſe a large poſterity,
Which from the earth, which they may long poſſeſs
With laſting happineſs,
Up to your haughty palaces may mount,
And for the guerdon of their glorious merit
May heavenly tabernacles there inherit,
Of bleſſed Saints for to increaſe the count.
So let us reſt, ſweet Love, in hope of this,
And ceaſe till then our timely joys to ſing;
The woods no more us anſwer, nor our echo ring.

Song, made in lieu of many ornaments,
With which my Love ſhould duly have been deckt,
Which cutting off through haſty accidents,
Ye would not ſtay your due time to expect,
But promiſt both to recompenſe;
Be unto her a goodly ornament,
And for ſhort time an endleſs monument.

V. PROTHALAMION.

['*The ſtanza*' *of the* '*Prothalamion*' '*is to my ear even more exquiſitely conſtructed than that of the Epithalamion, the ſtructure more completely ſymmetrical, the cadences more amorouſly melodious. This noble Ode —to which with its companion, I can remember no rival, later or earlier, in its own ſtyle, none ſimilar or ſecond—naturally and rightly does not attempt the rapture and impaſſioned detail of the* Epithalamion, *—a treatment which Spenſer would doubtleſs have felt as wanting in propriety and elegance in caſe of other brides than his own.*

But the Song before Marriage, *within its narrower ſcope, is written with equal force and pictureſqueneſs; and the abſence of a more erotic ſtrain is admirably compenſated by the fine perſonal and hiſtorical alluſions which Spenſer has nowhere elſe introduced with greater ſkill*' (*Profeſſor Palgrave, as before, Works, vol. iv., p. ci*). *The* '*Prothalamion*' *was publiſhed along with the* '*Amoretti*' *and the* '*Epithalamion.*' *Its full title runs thus:*—'*Prothalamion, or a Spouſal Verſe made by Edmund Spenſer in honour of the double marriage of the two honourable and virtuous ladies, the Lady Elizabeth and the Lady Catharine Somerſet, daughters to the Right Honourable the Earl of Worceſter, and eſpouſed to the two worthy gentlemen, M. Henry Gilford and M. William Peter, Eſquires.*' —G.]

I.

CALM was the day, and through the trembling air,
Sweet-breathing *Zephyrus* did ſoftly play
A gentle ſpirit, that lightly did delay
Hot *Titan's* beams, which then did gliſter fair:
When I (whom ſullen care,

Through diſcontent of my long fruitleſs
ſtay
In Prince's Court, and expectation vain
Of idle hopes, which ſtill do fly away,
Like empty ſhadows, did afflict my brain)
Walk'd forth to eaſe my pain
Along the ſhore of ſilver-ſtreaming
Themmes,[1]
Whoſe rutty bank, the which his river
hems,
Was painted all with variable flowers,
And all the meads adorn'd with dainty
gems,
Fit to deck maidens' bowers,
And crown their paramours,
Againſt the Bridal day, which is not
long:
Sweet *Themmes!* run ſoftly, till I end
my Song.

2.

There, in a meadow, by the river's ſide,
A Flock of *Nymphs* I chancèd to eſpy,
All lovely daughters of the Flood
thereby,
With goodly greeniſh locks, all looſe
untied,
As each had been a bride,

[1] *Thames.*

And each one had a little wicker-baſket,
Made of fine twigs entraylèd[2] curiouſly,
In which they gatherèd flowers to fill
their flaſket:
And with fine fingers, cropt full feate-
ouſly[3]
The tender ſtalks on high.
Of every ſort, which in that meadow
grew,
They gatherèd ſome; the Violet, pallid
blue,
The little Daiſy, that at evening cloſes,
The virgin Lily, and the Primroſe true,
With ſtore of vermeil Roſes;
To deck their Bridegrooms' poſies,
Againſt the Bridal day, which was not
long:
Sweet *Themmes!* run ſoftly, till I end
my Song.

3.

With that I ſaw two Swans of goodly hue,
Come ſoftly ſwimming down along the
Lee;
Two fairer birds I yet did never ſee;
The ſnow which doth the top of *Pindus*
ſtrew,
Did never whiter ſhow,

[2] *twisted.* [3] *neatly.*

Nor *Jove* himſelf when he a Swan would be
For love of *Leda*, whiter did appear:
Yet *Leda* was they ſay as white as he,
Yet not ſo white as theſe, nor nothing near;
So purely white they were,
That even the gentle ſtream, the which them bare,
Seem'd foul to them, and bad his billows ſpare
To wet their ſilken feathers, leſt they might
Soil their fair plumes with water not ſo fair,
And mar their beauties bright,
That ſhone as heaven's light,
Againſt their Bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet *Themmes!* run ſoftly, till I end my Song.

4.

Eftſoons the *Nymphs*, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haſte, to ſee that ſilver brood,
As they came floating on the chryſtal flood:
Whom when they ſaw, they ſtood amazèd ſtill,
Their wond'ring eyes to fill:

Them ſeem'd they never ſaw a ſight ſo fair,
Of fowls ſo lovely, that they ſure did deem
Them heavenly born, or to be that ſame pair
Which through the ſky draw *Venus'* ſilver team:
For ſure they did not ſeem
To be begot of any earthly ſeed,
But rather angels or of angels' breed:
Yet were they bred of *Summer's-heat* they ſay,
In ſweeteſt ſeaſon, when each flower and weed
The earth did freſh array:
So freſh they ſeem'd as day,
Even as their Bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet *Themmes!* run ſoftly, till I end my Song.

5.

Then forth they all out of their baſkets drew,
Great ſtore of flowers, the honour of the field,
That to the ſenſe did fragrant odours yield;
All which upon thoſe goodly birds they threw,
And all the waves did ſtrew,

That like old *Peneus'* waters they did
ſeem, [ſhore
When down along by pleaſant *Tempe's*
Scatt'red with flowers, through *Theſſaly*
they ſtream,
That they appear through Lilli's plente-
ous ſtore,
Like a Bride's chamber floor:
Two of thoſe *Nymphs*, meanwhile, two
garlands bound,
Of freſheſt flowers which in that mead
they found,
The which preſenting all in trim array,
Their ſnowy foreheads therewithal they
crown'd,
Whilſt one did ſing this lay,
Prepar'd againſt that day,
Againſt their Bridal day, which was not
long:.
Sweet *Themmes!* run ſoftly, till I end
my Song.

6.

Ye gentle birds, the world's fair ornament,
And heaven's glory, whom this happy
hour
Doth lead unto your lovers' bliſsful bower,
Joy may you have, and gentle heart's
content
Of your Love's complement:

And let fair *Venus*, that is Queen of Love,
With her heart-quelling Son upon you ſmile,
Whoſe ſmile they ſay, hath virtue to remove
All Love's diſlike, and friendſhip's faulty guile
For ever to aſſoil.
Let endleſs Peace your ſteadfaſt hearts accord,
And bleſſèd Plenty wait upon your board,
And let your bed with pleaſures chaſte abound,
That fruitful iſſue may to you afford:
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joys redound
Upon your Bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet *Themmes!* run ſoftly, till I end my Song.

7.

So ended ſhe; and all the reſt around
To her redoubled that her underſong,
Which ſaid, their bridal day ſhould not be long.
And gentle Echo from the neighbour ground,
Their accents did reſound.

So forth, thoſe joyous birds did paſs along,
Adown the Lee, that to them mur-mur'd low,
As he would ſpeak, but that he lack'd a tongue
Yet did by ſigns his glad affection ſhow,
Making his ſtream run ſlow.
And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell
'Gan flock about theſe twain, that did excel
The reſt, ſo far, as *Cynthia* doth ſhend[4]
The leſſer ſtars. So they enrangèd well,
Did on thoſe two attend,
And their beſt ſervice lend,
Againſt their wedding-day, which was not long:
Sweet *Themmes!* run ſoftly, till I end my Song.

8.

At length they all to merry *London* came,
To merry *London*, my moſt kindly nurſe,
That to me gave this life's firſt native ſource:
Though from another place I take my name,
An houſe of ancient fame.

[4] *disgrace.*

There when they came, whereas thoſe bricky towers,
The which on *Themmes'* broad agèd back do ride,
Where now the ſtudious Lawyers have their bowers
That whilom wont the Templar Knights to bide,
Till they decay'd through pride:
Next whereunto there ſtands a ſtately place,
Where oft I gainèd gifts and goodly grace
Of that great Lord, which therein wont to dwell,
Whoſe want too well, now feels my friendleſs caſe:
But ah here fits not well
Old woes, but joys to tell
Againſt the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet *Themmes!* run ſoftly, till I end my Song.

9.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble Peer,
Great *England's* glory and the World's wide wonder,
Whoſe dreadful name, late through all *Spain* did thunder.
And *Hercules'* two pillars ſtanding near,
Did make to quake and fear:

Fair branch of Honour, flower of Chivalry,
That filleſt *England* with thy triumph's fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
And endleſs happineſs of thine own name
That promiſeth the ſame:
That through thy proweſs and victorious arms,
Thy country may be freed from foreign harms:
And great *Eliſa's* glorious name may ring
Through all the world, fill'd with thy wide alarms,
Which ſome brave Muſe may ſing
To ages following;
Upon the Bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet *Themmes!* run ſoftly, till I end my Song.

10.

From thoſe high towers, this noble Lord iſſuing,
Like radiant *Heſper* when his golden hair
In th' *Ocean* billows he hath bathèd fair,
Deſcended to the river's open viewing,
With a great train enſuing.

Above the reſt were goodly to be ſeen
Two gentle Knights of lovely face and feature,
Beſeeming well the bower of any Queen,
With gifts of wit and ornaments of nature,
Fit for ſo goodly ſtature:
That like the twins of *Jove* they ſeem'd in ſight,
Which deck the bauldrick[5] of the Heavens bright:
They two forth-pacing to the river's ſide,
Received thoſe two fair Brides, their Love's delight;
Which at th' appointed tide,
Each one did make his Bride,
Againſt their Bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet *Themmes!* run ſoftly, till I end my Song.

[5] *belt.*

VI. COLIN CLOUT'S COME HOME AGAIN, 1591—95.

[*The proſe of Spenſer is ſo limited that we gladly avail ourſelves of his 'Epiſtles Dedicatory' to ſhow how cunning was his ſtyle therein. Moreover, it is delightful to aſſociate two ſuch names as Raleigh and Spenſer. Our limits* per force *make our ſelections from this moſt realiſtic and precious of Spenſer's poems brief—in ſhort, confined to his undying reminiſcences of his 'Roſalind.'*—G.]

TO THE RIGHT WORTHY AND NOBLE KNIGHT, SIR WALTER RALEIGH, CAPTAIN OF HER MAJESTY'S GUARD, LORD WARDEN OF THE STANNERIES, AND LIEUTENANT OF THE COUNTY OF CORNWALL.

Sir, that you may ſee that I am not always idle, as ye think, though not greatly well occupied, nor altogether undutiful, though not preciſely officious, I make you preſent of this ſimple paſtoral, unworthy of your higher conceit for the meanneſs of the ſtyle, but agreeing with the truth in circumſtance and matter. The which I

humbly beſeech you to accept in part of payment of the infinite debt in which I acknowledge myſelf bounden unto you, for your ſingular favours and ſundry good turns ſhowed to me at my late being in England, and with your good countenance protect againſt the malice of evil mouths, which are always wide open to carp at and miſconſtrue my ſimple meaning:

I pray continually for your happineſs. From my houſe of Kilcolman, *the* 27. *of December.*
1591.

Yours ever humbly,
Ed. Sp.

..... So having ſaid, *Meliſſa* ſpake at will,
Colin, thou now full deeply haſt divin'd
Of love and beauty, and with wondrous ſkill,
Haſt *Cupid* ſelf depainted in his kind.
To thee are all true lovers greatly bound,
That doſt their cauſe ſo mightily defend:
But moſt, all women are thy debtors found,
That doſt their bounty ſtill ſo much commend.

That ill (ſaid *Hobbinol*) they him requite,
For having lovèd ever one moſt dear:
He is repaid with ſcorn and foul deſpite,
That irks each gentle heart which it doth hear.
Indeed (ſaid *Lucid*) I have often heard
Fair *Roſalind* of divers foully blamed:
For being to that ſwain too cruel hard,
That her bright glory elſe hath much defamed.
But who can tell what cauſe had that fair Maid
To uſe him ſo that uſèd her ſo well:
Or who with blame can juſtly her upbraid,
For loving not? for who can love compel?
And ſooth to ſay, it is foolhardy thing,
Raſhly to wyten[1] creatures ſo divine,
For demigods they be, and firſt did ſpring
From heaven, though graft in frailneſs feminine.

[1] *blame.*

And well I wot, that oft I heard it ſpoken,
How one that faireſt *Helene* did revile:[1]
Through judgment of the gods to been ywroken
Loſt both his eyes and ſo remain'd long while,
Till he recanted had his wicked rhymes,
And made amends to her with treble praiſe:
Beware therefore, ye grooms, I read betimes,
How raſhly blame of *Roſalind* ye raiſe.
Ah ſhepherds (then ſaid *Colin*) ye ne weet[2]
How great a guilt upon your heads ye draw,
To make ſo bold a doom with words unmeet,
Of thing celeſtial which ye never ſaw.

[1] He refers to Stesichorus being deprived of sight for defaming Helen: he was not ignorant like Homer, but as a friend of the Muses knew the cause, and immediately composed the following lines: 'This tale is not true. Thou didst not go on board the well-benched ships, nor reach the towers of Troy.' Thus having composed this entire recantation, as it is called, he immediately recovered his sight (Plato's 'Phædrus,' 44).

[2] *wit.*

For ſhe is not likeas the other crew
Of ſhepherd's daughters which amongſt you be,
But of divine regard and heavenly hue,
Excelling all that ever ye did ſee.
Not then to her that ſcornèd thing ſo baſe,
But to myſelf the blame that lookt ſo high:
So high her thoughts as ſhe herſelf have place,
And loath each lowly thing with lofty eye.
Yet ſo much grace let her vouchſafe to grant
To ſimple ſwain, ſith her I may not love:
Yet that I may her honour paravant,[4]
And praiſe her worth, though far my wit above,
Such grace ſhall be ſome guerdon for the grief,
And long affliction which I have endured:
Such grace ſometimes ſhall give me ſome relief,
And eaſe of pain which cannot be recured.

[4] *put in the front.*